

## Research Report DCSF-RR194

# Parental Opinion Survey 2009

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TNS-BMRB



department for  
**children, schools and families**

**Research Report No  
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***TNS-BMRB***

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

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## **Glossary**

### ***Abbreviations***

|      |   |
|------|---|
| DCSF | Department for Children, Schools and Families         |
| PICE | Parental Involvement in Children's Education [Survey] |
| NSPC | National Survey of Parents and Children               |
| SEN  | Special Educational Needs                             |

### ***Explanations***

Non-resident parents      Parents whose child / children live at a different address

Reference child      The child that was randomly selected at the start of the survey and was referred to in questions throughout the survey interview.

NSPC      In 2007 BMRB was commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to conduct this segmentation study of parents and children in England. The study was seen as an important contribution towards understanding how the DCSF can help parents and children to engage more with the education system. The study was conducted using a random probability methodology, and face to face interviews were conducted with 2,572 parents and carers of children aged 0-19. In each household where a 10-19 year old was present, one was selected for interview and a total of 1,154 interviews with young people were achieved.

PICE      In 2007 the DCSF commissioned BMRB to undertake research to assess the extent to which parents are involved in their children's education. The research also explored the level of awareness parents have of government initiatives in this field. Just over 5,000 20 minute CATI interviews were conducted with a random sample of parents who had children aged 5-16 attending state schools in England. Surveys were also conducted in 2001 and 2004.

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

1. This project was set up in order to provide Ministers with information about the opinions of parents on a range of issues, focusing on their role as parents, their confidence as parents and their views about the services that they or their children use. The questionnaire and this report were structured around a series of parental confidence themes that were created by the DCSF to provide guidance for this survey.
2. The survey was conducted between February and May 2009 and covered a representative sample of 2,384 parents with resident or non-resident children aged 0-19 in England.

## Confidence in Parenting Skills (Chapter 1)

3. The vast majority (94 per cent) of parents were confident when caring for their children. Confidence was highest for parents of older children and amongst parents who left the education system at a later age (aged 22 or over). In contrast, levels of confidence were lowest amongst parents who did not speak English as a first language (81 per cent). Although still relatively high, this is significantly lower than for other groups.
4. Nearly all parents (99 per cent) found parenting rewarding, with 83 per cent saying that they found it rewarding 'most of the time'. Non-resident parents expressed the lowest levels of satisfaction (73 per cent), whilst parents of children under three years old found parenting most rewarding (88 per cent).
5. Over two thirds of parents found parenting frustrating most or some of the time. Parents of children with SEN were less likely than average to find parenting rewarding and were more likely to find it frustrating most or some of the time (74 per cent said this was the case). Further analysis of frustration levels shows that demographic and attitudinal factors are key drivers of frustration. More specifically, frustration is increased for parents with three or more children, lower education background and working status (two full-time working parents). Attitudinal factors which have the largest impact include perceived lack of time, perceived behaviour issues; and lack of parental confidence.
6. Over a third (36 per cent) of parents argued with their child either most days or more than once a week. The proportion doing so increased amongst parents of children aged 6-10 (47 per cent) and non-working parents (38 per cent). However, parents of children aged 6-10 were most likely to say they got on very well with their child (81 per cent) and there was a gradual decline for parents of older children.
7. Parents of children with SEN were more likely than average to cite difficulties in managing their children's behaviour and experience negative outcomes as a result. More specifically, they were more likely to argue with their children at increased frequency; get on less well with their children; have problems with their child's obedience; struggle to control their child's behaviour; experience behaviour problems which have affected their mental health; experience tension with their partners; and experience major family rows.
8. The data also indicate some important findings related to lone parents. Lone parents were more likely than average to face a struggle dealing with their child's behaviour and only get involved in behaviour management when their child has done something really serious. In addition (and not exclusive to lone parent families), mothers were more likely than fathers to experience behaviour problems which have affected their mental health.

9. A Confidence Index (see section 1.11) was produced for this survey providing a measure of parental confidence. Age of child was the key driver of high confidence and parents of children aged under three were most likely to appear in the 'higher' confidence group (46 per cent)<sup>1</sup>, while only three per cent of parents of young people aged 16 or above were highly confident. Other factors were also important. Parents who left the education system aged 19 or above were more likely to fall into the 'higher' confidence group (26 per cent). Non white respondents and those not working were also more likely to have 'higher' confidence (both 26 per cent). In contrast, non-resident parents were most likely to appear in the 'lower' confidence group (46 per cent).
10. High levels of confidence had positive impacts on other aspects of parenting, such as enjoyment of parenting, parental involvement and behaviour management.

### **Perceived Ability of Parents to Support Child's Learning (Chapter 2)**

11. Levels of parental involvement in children's learning were lowest amongst non-resident parents (42 per cent said they were not involved). Although more involved than non-resident parents, involvement was lower than average for fathers (20 per cent not involved), parents under 25 (18 per cent not involved), parents with three or more children (16 per cent not involved) and parents working full time (16 per cent not involved). Involvement was highest amongst mothers, part time workers and parents of children with an illness or disability. Further analysis shows that parents of children with a statement of SEN were most likely to feel very involved (54 per cent).
12. When asked who was most involved in their child's school life - them or their partner, very few fathers said they were most involved. Mothers were five times more likely to say they were most involved. A third of parents said that they and their partner were equally involved in their child's schooling.
13. Most parents (91 per cent) felt confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development. Confidence increased to 96 per cent amongst those with more experience of the education system (terminal education age of 19 or older). Similarly, confidence was higher than average (94 per cent) amongst parents of younger children (10 or under). Confidence was lowest amongst parents who did not speak English as their first language, non-resident parents and those who left the education system at an early age (15 years old or younger).
14. The age of the child was an important factor affecting parental confidence in helping children with homework. Confidence was highest amongst parents of children under 10 (89 per cent). In contrast, confidence was lowest for parents of children aged 16 or over (42 per cent). Confidence was also lower than average for parents who themselves had an illness or disability, those who left the education system aged 16 or under and parents who do not speak English as their first language. Consistent with ratings of confidence, the frequency of helping with homework is closely tied into which school year the child is in. Parents of children in lower school years were more likely than parents of children in later school years to help their child with homework.
15. Nearly half (46 per cent) of full-time working parents felt that they did not spend enough time with their children. Fathers and parents of children with SEN were also more likely than average to say that they did not spend enough time. Non-resident parents were the least positive about the amount of time they spent with their child. A third (32 per cent) said the time they spent with their child was nowhere near enough. In contrast, 16 per cent of young parents (aged under 25) felt they spent too much time with their child.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 1.11 for further detail



16. Many parents who claimed to be less involved in their child's schooling expressed a desire for more involvement in the future. Parents of three or more children - 38 per cent, fathers - 37 per cent, and non-resident parents - 45 per cent all mentioned a desire to get more involved. While the majority of fathers (62 per cent) were happy with their level of involvement, significantly more fathers than mothers said they wanted to be more involved (37 versus 27 per cent).
17. As noted earlier, a large proportion of parents of children with a statement of SEN felt very involved in their children's education. Two fifths of these parents also sought more involvement in the future.

### **Access to parental information and advice services (Chapter 3)**

18. Around two-thirds (68 per cent) of all parents were 'service users', i.e. they had used at least one of the support services asked about within the last year. Parents of children aged under three were most likely to be service users (85 per cent), whilst the least likely users were non-resident parents (43 per cent). Confidence was a key factor: parents in the low confidence group were the least likely to be service users (53 per cent increasing to 85 per cent for the high confidence group).
19. Only tiny proportions of parents who had not used a particular service said they had required information but not received it, i.e. the overwhelming majority of non-service users reported that they simply do not require any advice.
20. The findings relating to 'informal services' show that seven in ten (71 per cent) parents had spoken to other parents / carers about parenting issues within the last month and four-fifths (79 per cent) to other family members; however, 12 per cent of parents had spoken to neither. The types of parents who were less likely to spend time talking to other parents or family members were generally the same groups as those who were also found to be less likely to have used formal support services in the last year.
21. Parents were most likely to obtain information, advice or support by means of written material (61 per cent) or in person (56 per cent); in comparison, smaller proportions used the internet (27 per cent) and telephone helplines (19 per cent) for this purpose. There was near uniformity in the use of a telephone helpline for the purpose of receiving information across the various sub-groups, suggesting that, as a means of accessing parental support services, it is perhaps more accessible to parents as a whole than other forms of communication.
22. Only a very small proportion of service users (five per cent) reported that they had not received information in the way they had required it, signalling that the vast majority were content with the method by which they had obtained advice. Further, around nine in ten or more said they found it easy to obtain information about nearly all the different services they required, with services related to schools recording the highest levels for ease of acquiring information (98 per cent). Only disability services recorded notably lower levels of satisfaction for ease of obtaining information (76 per cent).
23. One quarter of fathers said they would be likely to attend a local group specifically for fathers to discuss parenting issues. Enthusiasm was highest amongst non-white fathers (60 per cent) and fathers where English was not their first language (57 per cent). Confidence is a key determinant in whether fathers would be likely to attend a fathers' group: those in the high confidence group were twice as likely as those in the low confidence group to say they might attend (38 and 19 per cent respectively).

#### **Confidence in parental support services (Chapter 4)**

24. Encouragingly, the vast majority of parents felt that the support services they had accessed were useful. In particular, 97 per cent of parents who had used services offering information or advice on teenagers felt they had been of use. Services relating to disability received the lowest rating in terms of usefulness (87 per cent), but this figure still represents a high level of satisfaction in relative terms.
25. There was considerable variation across the different services in relation to whether parents felt their parenting skills / confidence had been improved as a result of the service accessed. Four-fifths (79 per cent) of parents who had sought advice on pregnancy, maternity or babies felt their parenting skills had improved to some extent compared with one third (34 per cent) of parents who had accessed information on finances.
26. There was also some variance across the different services in relation to those that parents said had given them the opportunity to provide feedback. More than one third (36 per cent) of parents who had accessed disability support services said that the option to provide feedback had been available decreasing to fourteen per cent who said there was an opportunity to do so for services related to health, finances and laws and rights.
27. Around three-quarters (77 per cent) of parents said they were confident they would know where to go if they needed to obtain information or advice about general or specific parenting issues.
28. The vast majority (94 per cent) of parents had been in contact with staff at their child's nursery, school or college within the last year. Two-fifths (39 per cent) had communicated within the last week, whilst only small proportions said there had been no contact in the last year or not at all (three per cent for both).
29. Parents reported having used a number of different methods for obtaining information about their child's progress within the last year in varying proportions: three-quarters (74 per cent) said they had received information about how their child was getting on at nursery, school or college from parents' evenings through to only six per cent who had done so via text messages.
30. Despite three-quarters of parents reporting that they had attended a parents' evening in the last year, one quarter (23 per cent) nonetheless felt that parents' evenings should be used more, whilst one sixth (18 per cent) felt that greater use could be made of notes or letters.

# Introduction

## Policy Background

31. The 2007 Children's Plan set out the Government's strategy for making this country 'the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up'.<sup>2</sup> The Plan specifies how DCSF will achieve this by working in partnership with stakeholders, children, young people, and their families (mothers and fathers) and carers. The Plan positions families at the forefront of Government thinking. The Children's Plan sets out how "families are the bedrock of society and the place for nurturing happy, capable and resilient children".
32. Working in partnership with parents is a unifying theme of the Children's Plan. The plan recognises that parents bring up children, not Government, but more needs to be done to reach out and involve all parents. The Government recognises that families are more diverse than ever before, the role of mothers and fathers in modern families is changing. A holistic approach is needed to ensure that services are designed and operate for all parents. The system needs to be flexible to meet the needs of families, in whatever shape or form. In the last 10 years, family life has become more complex with changes in employment patterns meaning that more people are juggling family life and paid work. Many parents are also supporting elderly relatives as well as their own children.
33. A major challenge is engaging with the most disadvantaged families: These parents often lack the confidence, skills, time or motivation to engage in their children's learning. The Government has announced a number of measures to tackle these challenges, including outreach support and Parent Support Advisers. The plan recognises these challenges "...We also need to reach out to the minority of families who most need our help but do not always come forward without additional encouragement or support".
34. The Children's Plan also included a commitment to putting parents' views at the heart of Government by creating a Parents' Panel to advise the Government on policies affecting parents.  
  
*"to provide a voice for parents we will set up a new national Parents' Panel with links into a full cross-section of public opinion, so these perspectives are better reflected in government policy making" Children's Plan, 2007, page 21.*
35. Building on the Children's Plan, The Government's recent White Paper<sup>3</sup> proposes a 'Parent Guarantee'. The Parent Guarantee aims to ensure that children have the best possible opportunities to fulfil their potential by ensuring partnership working with mothers, fathers and other carers in their child's learning and development.

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<sup>2</sup> DCSF (2007) Children's Plan

<sup>3</sup> Your Child, Your Schools, Our Future: Building a 21st Century Schools System: June 2009

## **Aims and Objectives**

36. The DCSF commissioned BMRB to set up and co-ordinate the national Parental Opinion Survey and Parents' Panel<sup>4</sup>.
37. The aim of the survey was to provide Ministers with information about the opinions of parents on a range of issues focusing on their role as parents, and in particular their confidence as parents and their views about the services that they or their children use. To provide guidance for the survey the DCSF created a number of parental confidence measures. These were grouped under four major themes and are detailed below.
38. These measures acted as key aims and objectives for the survey. More specifically, the questionnaire and this report have been structured around them.

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<sup>4</sup> The Parents Panel comprises 40 parents, reflecting a wide mix of demographic and attitudinal factors. Panel members meet quarterly over a period of three years to discuss a range of issues linked to their role as parents and their views about the services they use

|           | Core Theme   | Measure  |
|-----------|--|--|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Parents feel able to support their child's learning</b> |  |
| 1.1       |  | Are schools doing enough to engage parents?  |
| 1.2       |  | Have schools engaged parents? How often?   |
| 1.3       |  | Do parents feel able to support their child's learning at school?  |
| 1.4       |  | Do parents feel able to support their child's learning at home?  |
| 1.5       |  | Do parents have access to information and support needed in their role as parents as partners?   |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Access to information and advice</b>                    |  |
| 2.1       |  | How confident are parents that information that they need is available?  |
| 2.2       |  | How difficult do parents find it to access the information they need?  |
| 2.3       |  | Is the info needed available through appropriate range of locations / channels?  |
| 2.4       |  | Is info needed available to parents of all backgrounds?  |
| 2.5       |  | Are parents able to find the information they need in the format they require?   |
| 2.6       |  | How parents have used information to access services?  |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Confidence in support services</b>                      |  |
| 3.1       |  | Have parents been involved in the design & development of services?  |
| 3.2       |  | Have parents used support services?  |
| 3.3       |  | Do parents find that the support services used have met their needs?   |
| 3.4       |  | Have services helped parents to support their children?  |
| 3.5       |  | Are there any barriers preventing parents from using services (e.g. parents not being aware of services)?  |
| 3.6       |  | Can parents with complex needs get the support they require?   |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Confidence in parenting skills</b>                      |  |
| 4.1       |  | Do parents report problems in managing their children's behaviour?   |
| 4.2       |  | Do parents find that services to help them develop their parenting skills (e.g. available through parenting classes, advice services, Sure Start Children's Centres, outreach) meet their needs? |
| 4.3       |  | Do parents take up available services which aim to improve their parenting skills?   |
| 4.4       |  | Did these services improve their parenting skills?   |

## **Summary of survey method**

### ***Sample design***

43. The survey was based on a representative sample of parents and carers of children aged 0-19 in England. The sample consisted of a core sample and a boost sample of parents living in deprived areas. This was designed to ensure adequate coverage of parents in low income households.
44. Parent and carer was defined as parents, step-parents, foster parents and guardians of child(ren) aged 0-19 who were either resident in their household or lived elsewhere.
45. The sampling and eligibility criteria for the survey were consistent with the NSPC. The only difference was that non-resident parents were also deemed eligible.<sup>5</sup> Non-resident parents refer to parents who lived at a separate address from their child. To be eligible to participate in the survey, non-resident parents had to have seen their child in the last 12 months or tried to make contact with their child in the last 12 months. This was to ensure that they were able to answer questions about their child which referenced the previous 12 months.
46. A random probability methodology was adopted<sup>6</sup>, with a sample drawn from the small-user Postcode Address File. At each sampled address a dwelling unit was randomly selected where there was more than one at the address. Before selecting a parent for interview, where necessary the interviewer randomly selected a “parenting unit” from the sampled household. Parenting unit was defined as a set of parents or single parent of a child - households could contain more than one unit if for example there were three generations at an address (e.g. parent with teenage child with a child of their own). Random selection ensured that single parents living in multi-generational households were not under-represented in the survey. This was because they had an equal chance of selection even if the other parenting unit(s) in the household was made up of two parents. Within each parenting unit, where there were two parents, one was randomly selected for interview.
47. Interviewing was conducted using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).
48. Further details on the sampling methodology can be found in Appendix C.

### ***Questionnaire design and pilot survey***

49. The questionnaire used for the survey had eight discrete sections:
  - A. Household Grid / Child selection
  - B. Child's education status
  - C. Segmentation questions (used to replicate the NSPC Segmentation)
  - D. Parental engagement with children's learning
  - E. Information / Advice and confidence in support services
  - F. Informal parenting information / advice services
  - G. Confidence in parenting skills (self-completion)
  - H. Demographics

---

<sup>5</sup> The inclusion of non-resident parents had a minimal impact on the overall survey findings as they made up just three per cent of the interviewed sample.

<sup>6</sup> Random probability sampling is where each element of the sample population is drawn at random and has a known chance of being selected. The random selection process should ensure to some extent that the sample is broadly representative of the population / excluding any non-response bias that might be present.

50. A number of questions in the survey were taken from the NSPC and PICE surveys as there was some overlap with the issues examined in each. New questions were also formulated specifically for this survey, especially for the section dealing with information and advice services for parents.
51. Due to the sensitive nature of some of the questions and the fact that many questions involved asking about personal relationships with other household members who may have been present, a section of the questionnaire was administered using Computer Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI), which allowed parents to complete this section in private using a laptop.
52. A pilot survey was conducted to test aspects of the questionnaire including the initial contact stage (i.e. the introduction and screening), the interview length and the actual questions themselves (especially the questions being used for the first time on this survey). Nineteen interviews were conducted during the pilot stage and revisions to the questions were made on the basis of the pilot findings.
53. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix E.

### ***Fieldwork, analysis and weighting***

54. All interviews took place in England between February and May 2009. The interview lasted an average of 31 minutes. A total of 2,384 interviews were conducted with parents, based on a 64% response rate.<sup>7</sup>
55. Once interviews had been conducted, data was collated and open-ended responses were categorised/coded (i.e. respondent verbatim responses were added into response code(s) that most closely matched the response(s) given). All response lists were approved before use and a full SPSS dataset was produced and checked.
56. Design weights<sup>8</sup> were applied to reflect the differential probability of selection for eligible parents in different size households. The design weight adjusts for unequal probability of selection within the household. The sample selection for the survey is based on households; however, only one person was interviewed per household. This means that people who lived in households where there was more than one eligible adult had a different (lower) probability of being interviewed than those who lived alone. The design weight simply makes an adjustment to compensate for the unequal probability of selection. The percentages reported throughout the report are based on weighted data.
57. A socio-demographic profile of interviewed respondents is provided below along with socio-demographic profiles of interviewed respondents in the NSPC and PICE surveys.
58. Please note that although the NSPC was almost the same as the Parental Opinion Survey in terms of interview technique and sampling approach (see above), the PICE survey was slightly different in that it was a telephone survey with parents who had children aged 5-16 attending state schools in England. Therefore, caution should be taken when comparing responses from the Parental Opinion Survey and PICE.

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<sup>7</sup> Response rate is worked out by dividing the number of interviews achieved (2,384) by the number of eligible/assumed eligible households in the sample (3,741).

<sup>8</sup> These are applied to correct for the differential non-response of sub-groups.

| <b>Table 1; Socio-demographic characteristics of Parents in Parental Opinion and NSPC and PICE surveys</b> | <b>% All Interviewed Parental Opinion Sample</b> | <b>% All Interviewed NSPC Sample</b> | <b>% All Interviewed PICE Sample</b> |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>  |  |                                      |                                      |
| Male   | 44   | 44                                   | 44                                   |
| Female   | 56   | 56                                   | 56                                   |
| <b>Age</b>   |  |                                      |                                      |
| Under 25   | 5  | 4                                    | 1                                    |
| 25-34  | 26   | 27                                   | 17                                   |
| 35-44  | 44   | 45                                   | 53                                   |
| 45 or over   | 26   | 24                                   | 30                                   |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>   |  |                                      |                                      |
| White  | 86   | 83                                   | 87                                   |
| Non-white  | 14   | 17                                   | 13                                   |
| <b>Household Income</b>  |  |                                      | Not provided                         |
| Under £10,000  | 10   | 11                                   | -                                    |
| £10,000 to £24,999   | 15   | 19                                   | -                                    |
| £25,000 to £44,999   | 23   | 26                                   | -                                    |
| £45,000 or more  | 31   | 28                                   | -                                    |
| Not known / given  | 21   | 16                                   | -                                    |
| <b>Highest Qualification</b>   |  |                                      | Not provided                         |
| Degree level or above  | 27   | 29                                   | -                                    |
| A-level / Voc. level 3 or above  | 30   | 29                                   | -                                    |
| Below A-level / Voc. level 3 or other unknown  | 28   | 29                                   | -                                    |
| No qualifications  | 15   | 13                                   | -                                    |
| <b>Marital status</b>  |  |                                      |                                      |
| Married  | 65   | 76*                                  | 82*                                  |
| Living with a partner (unmarried)  | 13   | -                                    | -                                    |
| Separated / divorced   | 13   | 10                                   | 8                                    |
| Single (never married)   | 9  | 14                                   | 8                                    |
| Other  | 1  | 1                                    | 2                                    |
| <b>Age of child</b>  |  |                                      |                                      |
| Under 3  | 18   | 19                                   | 0                                    |
| 3-5  | 16   | 10                                   | 8                                    |
| 6-10   | 21   | 26                                   | 44                                   |
| 11-15  | 26   | 23                                   | 43                                   |
| 16-17  | 12   | 11                                   | 5                                    |
| 18-19  | 7  | 12                                   | 0                                    |
| <b>Parent of reference child with SEN</b>  |  |                                      |                                      |
| Yes  | 6  | 7                                    | 12                                   |
| No   | 93   | 93                                   | 88                                   |

\* This is a total percentage for 'Married and Living with a Partner'. The NSPC and PICE surveys only recorded this information.



### **Recreating the parent segments**

59. The parent segments were originally formed as part of the National Survey of Parents and Children 2008 (NSPC) study to assist the DCSF in their understanding of different perspectives and experiences of parents, with the aim to identify the likely incentives and motivations that are important to different parenting types.
60. A range of questions were combined in the NSPC study to create a number of dimensions associated with parenting. These dimensions were then used to develop nine segments by identifying similarities within a group and differences from others.
61. The nine segments identified were:
  - A1. Comfortable and Confident
  - A2. Committed but discontented
  - A3. Struggling through
  - A4. Supportive but Frustrated
  - A5. Relaxing and caring
  - A6. Stepping back
  - A7. Separate lives
  - A8. Family focused
  - A9. Content and Self-fulfilled
62. An overview of the characteristics of each segment is provided in the Table overleaf.

## Overview of the key characteristics of each parent segment

| Segment                        | Overview  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| A1. Comfortable and Confident  | Generally content and optimistic about their lives, enjoy parenting and spending time with their children. They place a high value on learning for their children, who are normally young. Typically both parents work, generating medium-high incomes.   |
| A2. Committed but discontented | Although they sometimes find parenting frustrating and difficult to cope with, they are very committed to their family. They tend to have a lower than average income but they value education highly for its importance to their children's future.  |
| A3. Struggling through         | Sometimes finds parenting frustrating or difficult to cope with and even unrewarding. They tend to have lower than average income, and are less likely than average to feel education will have a strong impact on their child's future.  |
| A4. Supportive but Frustrated  | Although they sometimes find parenting frustrating or difficult to cope with, parents in this segment enjoy spending time with their family. They recognise the importance of learning to their children, but are less confident than other parents.  |
| A5. Relaxing and caring        | This segment enjoys the time that they spend with their children, and rarely finds parenting difficult to cope with. They tend to place less importance on learning than others, but do still get involved in the learning of the children, who are normally young.   |
| A6. Stepping back              | Although they find parenting rewarding, it is not without frustrations and they are more likely than other parent segments to argue relatively frequently with their children, who are likely to be teenagers. Though they believe in the importance of education, they are less likely to be involved in their child's learning. |
| A7. Separate lives             | Enjoyment of parenting tends to be lower than average in this segment, but the majority of parents feel that they are able to cope most of the time. They are less likely to feel that education is important to their children, who tend to be teenagers, and less likely to get involved in it.                                 |
| A8. Family focused             | These parents are likely to be satisfied with their environment and to find parenting enjoyable and rewarding. They value learning and are the most likely to say they feel very involved in their child's education.   |
| A9. Content and Self-fulfilled | This segment rarely finds parenting frustrating or difficult to cope with and tends to get on well with their children without many arguments - the vast majority are happy with how close they are as a family. They typically have teenage children and higher than average household incomes.                                  |

63. A large number of questions were used to form the original segments for the NSPC study. To recreate these segments for subsequent surveys, statistical formulae were developed that allocate respondents to the segment closest to their parental characteristics.

64. Consequently, a subset of seventeen relevant questions were identified that best allocated respondents to their associated segment without impacting too much on questionnaire content, relevancy and length. These were added into the Parental Opinion Survey and a successful recreation of the original segments was conducted.
65. A summary by parenting segment has been included at the end of each chapter in this report.
66. More details on the recreation of the parent segments are included in Appendix F. Key findings for each segment can be found in Appendix G.

### **General notes of caution**

67. It is important to recognise that parents may view confidence in a variety of different ways. The survey sought to capture general measures of confidence across a range of areas, but it is not known how confidence was assessed by individual parents. Further (more qualitative) research would be needed to unpack how parents assess their own parenting skills.
68. It is also important to recognise the impact of social desirability bias in surveys of this nature i.e. respondents giving interviewers answers they think are socially desirable rather than those which reflect true beliefs or attitudes. While every attempt is made to limit the potential effects of this, some effects are inevitable. These are limited in places by asking respondents to complete some sections of the interview themselves (entering responses into the interviewer's laptop).
69. At the start of the interview, once information about all members of the household was collected, the computer randomly selected a child within the parenting unit to be used as the "reference child" during the interview. As the interview often focused on the parent/child bond, this enabled questions to be asked about one particular child, rather than all children present. Reference children selected covered the full age-range 0-19. Although the majority of questions were asked only in relation to the reference child there were also questions asking about all of the respondents' children. These questions are highlighted throughout the report.

### **Structure of the report**

70. The chapters focusing on the survey results have been arranged thematically, drawing together questions on similar issues from across the parental survey. The structure follows the 4 broad parental confidence themes (discussed earlier) and is as follows:
  - Confidence in Parenting Skills (Chapter 1)
  - Parents Ability to Support their Child's Learning (Chapter 2)
  - Access to Information and Advice (Chapter 3)
  - Confidence in Support Services (Chapter 4)
  - Conclusions and Implications for Policy (Chapter 5)

## Reporting conventions

71. **When comparing sub-groups, the report only includes differences which are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.**
72. All data are weighted to make the findings representative of the sample population.
73. The following conventions have been used in the tables throughout the report:
  - Where the term “parent” is used, this refers to the parent *or* guardian of the reference child.
  - Where the term “child” is used, this refers to the reference child *or* young person aged 0-19 that was selected at the start of the survey.
  - Where the term “mother” is used, this refers to the interviewed mother, step-mother, foster-mother or other female guardian.
  - Where the term “father” is used, this refers to the interviewed father, step-father, foster-father or other male guardian.
  - Base refers to the unweighted base. It should be noted that due to the sampling strategy adopted, the weighted profile of the sample varies significantly from the unweighted profile. Principally this is due to the over-sampling of more deprived areas.
  - Where percentages add to more than 100%, this is because respondents could give more than one answer at that question.
  - A \* symbol denotes less than 0.5 per cent.
  - A - symbol denotes zero.

# 1 Confidence in Parenting Skills

## Key Findings

- The vast majority (94 per cent) of parents were confident when caring for their children.
- Although still relatively high, confidence was significantly lower than average amongst parents who did not speak English as a first language (81 per cent).
- Nearly all parents (99 per cent) found parenting rewarding, with 83 per cent saying that they found it rewarding 'most of the time'. Non-resident parents expressed the lowest levels of satisfaction (73 per cent), whilst parents of children under three years old found parenting most rewarding (88 per cent).
- Over two thirds of parents found parenting frustrating most or some of the time. Parents of children with SEN were less likely than average to find parenting rewarding and were more likely to find it frustrating most or some of the time (74 per cent said this was the case).
- Parents of children with SEN were more likely than average to cite difficulties in managing their children's behaviour and experience negative outcomes as a result.
- Over a third (36 per cent) of parents argued with their child either most days or more than once a week. However, almost all parents (99 per cent) said they got on well with their child with just over three quarters (77 per cent) saying they got on very well.
- A Confidence Index was produced for this survey (derived from *various* measures of parental confidence throughout the survey questionnaire). Age of the child was the key driver of high confidence and parents of children aged under three were most likely to appear in the 'higher' confidence group.

## 1.1 Introduction

74. This section provides some important background information about parental confidence levels, which sets the later sections of this report in context. Confidence in parenting is a central area of interest for the DCSF and the benefits of being a confident parent have long been recognised. More specifically, the confidence of parents may impact on parents' perceived ability to support their child's learning and their interaction with parental support services. The PICE Survey in 2007 showed that confidence levels had fallen over time in some areas (notably confidence helping children with homework). The benefits of greater parental involvement are widely acknowledged, e.g. Desforges (2003)<sup>9</sup>, but parents need to feel equipped with the necessary levels of confidence to get involved in their children's education and learning.
75. Aside from parental involvement levels, some parents face greater difficulties dealing with behaviour issues. This section also focuses on the challenges that some parents face and the confidence parents have in dealing with such issues. This section also seeks to unpack parental frustration alongside which groups find parenting most rewarding.
76. Specifically, this section addresses the following confidence theme:
- Do parents report problems in managing their children's behaviour?
77. There are a number of measures related to the core theme of confidence in parenting skills. Chapters 3 and 4 explore these measures in greater depth as they are primarily related to information and support services:
- Do parents find that services to help them develop their parenting skills meet their needs? (*covered in section 4.2*)
  - Do parents take up available services which aim to improve their parenting skills? (*covered in section 3.2*)
  - Did these services improve their parenting skills? (*covered in section 4.2.2*)

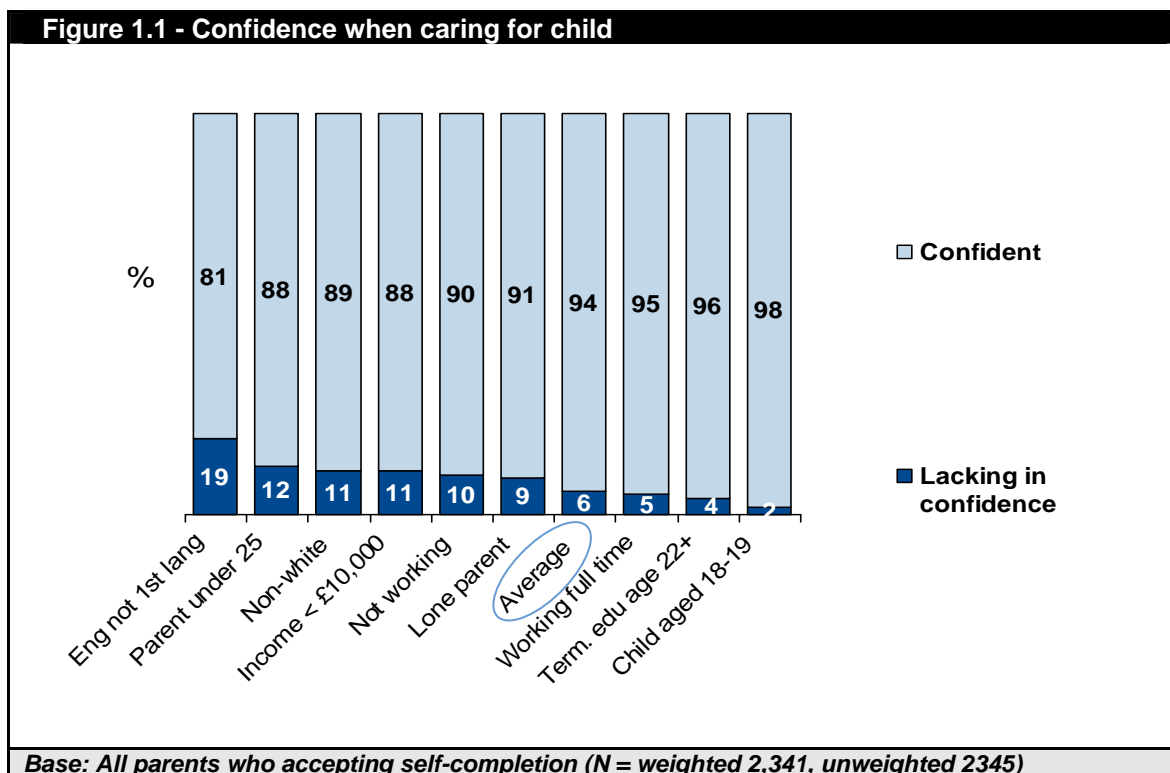
## 1.2 Confidence of parent when caring for child

78. The vast majority of parents (94 per cent) felt confident when caring for their children. As figure 1.1 shows, confidence was highest for parents with older children - aged 18-19 (98 per cent) and for parents who left the education system aged 22+ (96 per cent). Furthermore, parents who worked full time had high levels of confidence (95 per cent).
79. In contrast, confidence was lowest for parents where English was not their first language (81 per cent). A fifth (19 per cent) were therefore lacking in confidence - a significant minority. Although still relatively high, this is a notable lack of confidence compared with other types of parents. Confidence was also lower than average for non-white parents (89 per cent). However, this is heavily driven by larger proportions of these parents having English as a second language. For non-white parents with English as a first language, confidence increases (94 per cent).

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<sup>9</sup> 2003, Desforges, C with Abouuchaar, A: The Impact of Parental Involvement, Parental Support and Family Education on Pupil Achievements and Adjustment: A Literature Review, Department for Education and Skills

80. Younger parents (aged under 25) were also lacking in confidence (88 per cent) compared with their older counterparts.

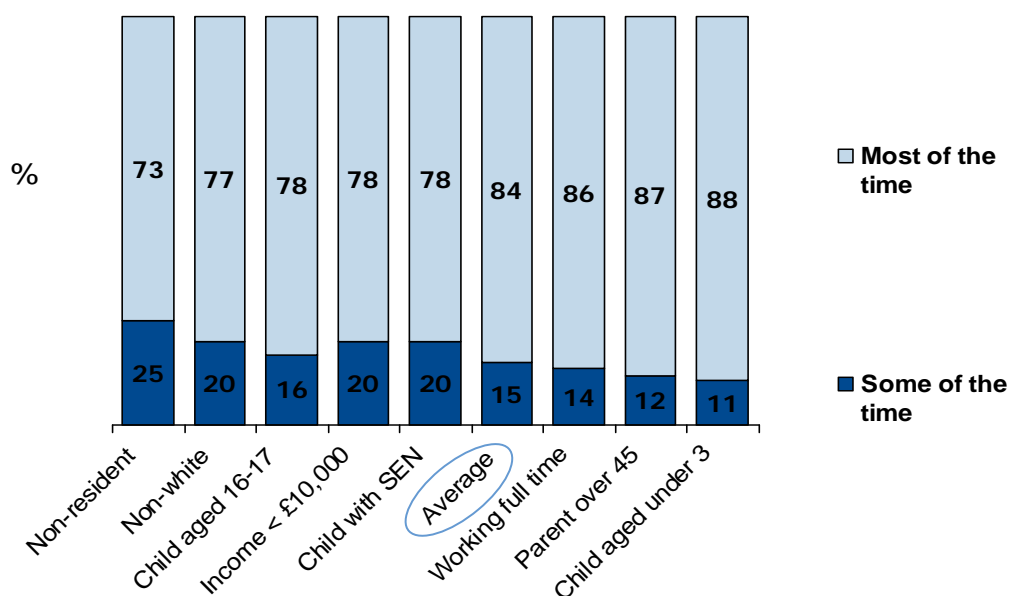


81. Working status is closely related to experience of the education system, with parents who left the system aged 22+ most likely to be working full time. However, further interrogation of the data show that both variables appear to be important drivers of confidence. More specifically, confidence was particularly low amongst parents that left education aged under 16 who were not working (89 per cent) compared with those who left aged 22+ and were working full time (97 per cent).

### 1.3 Parental reward

82. Nearly all parents (99 per cent) agreed that they found being a parent 'rewarding' most or some of the time. However, analysis of the proportion who found it rewarding most of the time reveals various sub-group differences.
83. As figure 1.2 illustrates, non-resident parents were least likely to find parenting rewarding most of the time (73 per cent). Other parents who were less likely than average to find parenting rewarding most of the time included non-white parents, parents with older children (aged 16-17), parents on lower incomes (less than £10,000 per annum) and parents of children with SEN.
84. In contrast, parents of children aged under three were most likely to find parenting rewarding - 88 per cent most of the time (compared with 78 per cent of parents of children aged 16-17).

**Figure 1.2 - Parental reward**



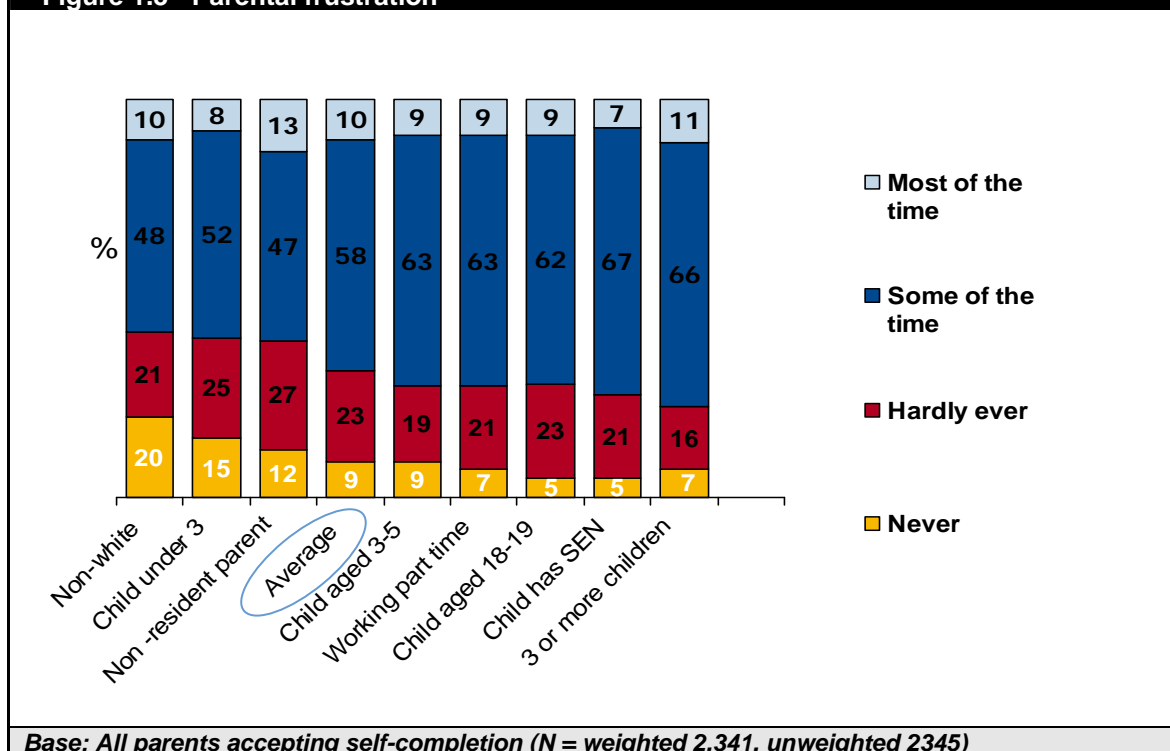
*Base: All parents accepting self-completion (N = weighted 2,341, unweighted 2345)*

## 1.4 Parental frustration

85. The survey uncovered higher levels of frustration than found in the NSPC. Two thirds of parents (68 per cent) found parenting frustrating most or some of the time (compared with less than half - 45 per cent - in the NSPC). This is a large difference, which might be attributable to a number of factors including an actual shift in opinion, social desirability bias, question positioning or sampling error.
86. The proportion of parents that are frustrated may have increased, although such a large increase is unlikely to have been expected in a relatively short time period. It is therefore reasonable to assume that some differences may be due to the varying content of the two surveys. More specifically, prior content asked in each survey will have some (unquantifiable) impact on the responses to future questions i.e. the content of the two surveys is not identical and there are many differences.
87. There may also be an element of social desirability bias (in both surveys) in the way that respondents answer questions, potentially giving interviewers answers they think they want to hear rather than those reflecting true beliefs or attitudes. With a sample size of c.2,300, some degree of sampling error is also inevitable.
88. Frustration peaked in larger families (77 per cent of parents with three or more children were frustrated 'most or some of the time'). As noted above, parents of children with SEN were less likely than average to find parenting rewarding. They were also more likely to find parenting frustrating 'most or some of the time' (74 per cent). This is in line with findings from the NSPC, which show that parents of an SEN child were more likely to be frustrated.
89. Parents of children aged under three found parenting most rewarding (as noted above). Related to this, they were also less likely than average to find parenting frustrating. Frustration levels were also lower than average amongst non-white parents and non-resident parents.



**Figure 1.3 - Parental frustration**



90. It is important to look deeper into levels of frustration to unpack the key drivers of increased frustration levels. A logistic regression was conducted to control for a number of factors when looking at levels of frustration among respondents. This approach allows the impact of different variables to be detected and isolates the most significant drivers of frustration.

91. Further details can be found in Appendix H. In summary, there are a number of important factors that affect parental frustration. Frustration is driven by demographic and attitudinal factors. Key demographic factors include:

- Increased number of children;
- Lower education background; and
- Working status (two full-time working parents).

It is worth noting that whilst levels of parental involvement are affected by gender of the parent and age of the child (see later section 2.2) frustration levels are not significantly affected by either of these factors.

92. Attitudinal factors which have the largest impact include:

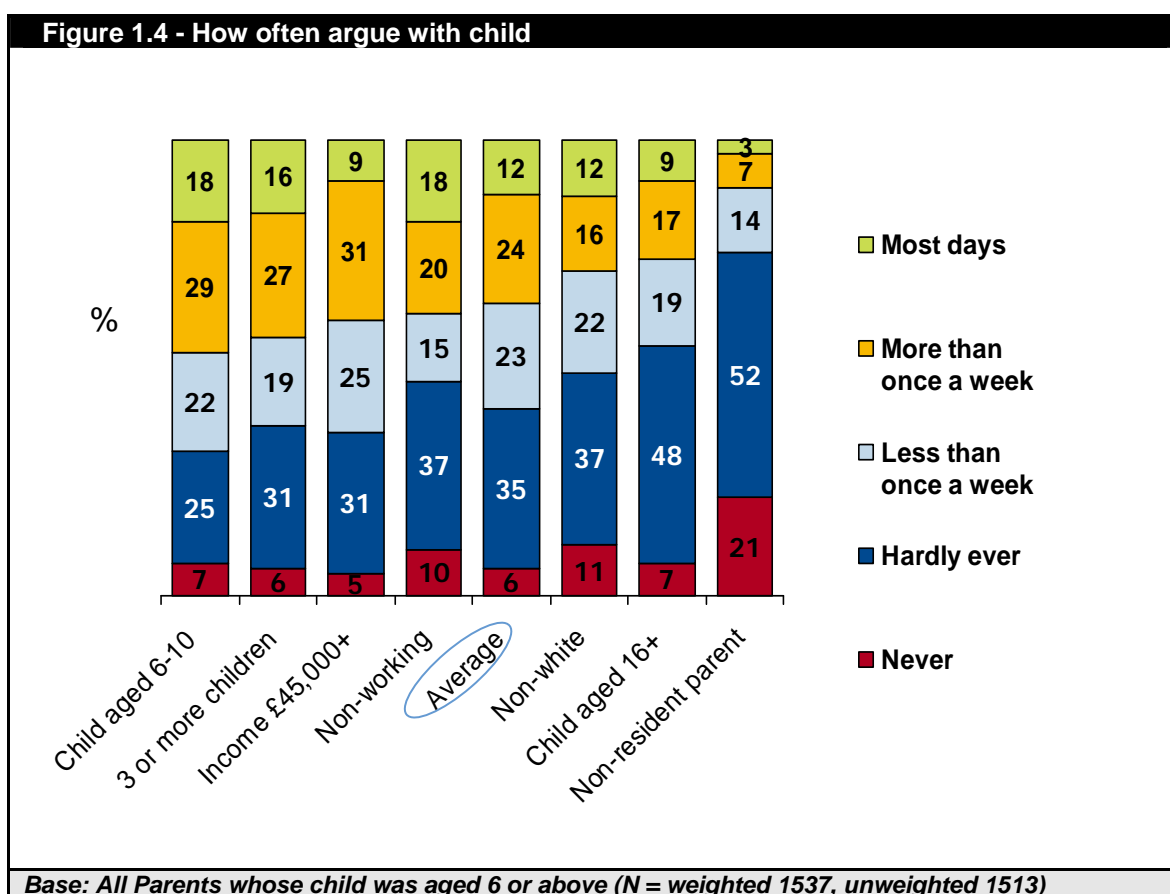
- Perceived lack of time;
- Perceived behaviour issues; and
- Lack of parental confidence.

93. While the above analysis shows that the demographic and attitudinal factors are significant drivers of frustration in their own right, some of the above are also linked. More specifically, parents with lower attainment levels have lower confidence whilst working parents are more likely to be dissatisfied with the amount of time that they have to spend with their children.

94. There are a number of policy challenges associated with engaging 'frustrated' parents further. These parents may need more support and encouragement as well as work to build their parental self-esteem and confidence. There are possible opportunities for schools to reach out to these parents, although they may require help identifying and supporting them. Additional support might be needed in behaviour management strategies. The key barriers that schools and support services might face in engaging this group are likely to centre on time constraints, a particular issue amongst working parents.

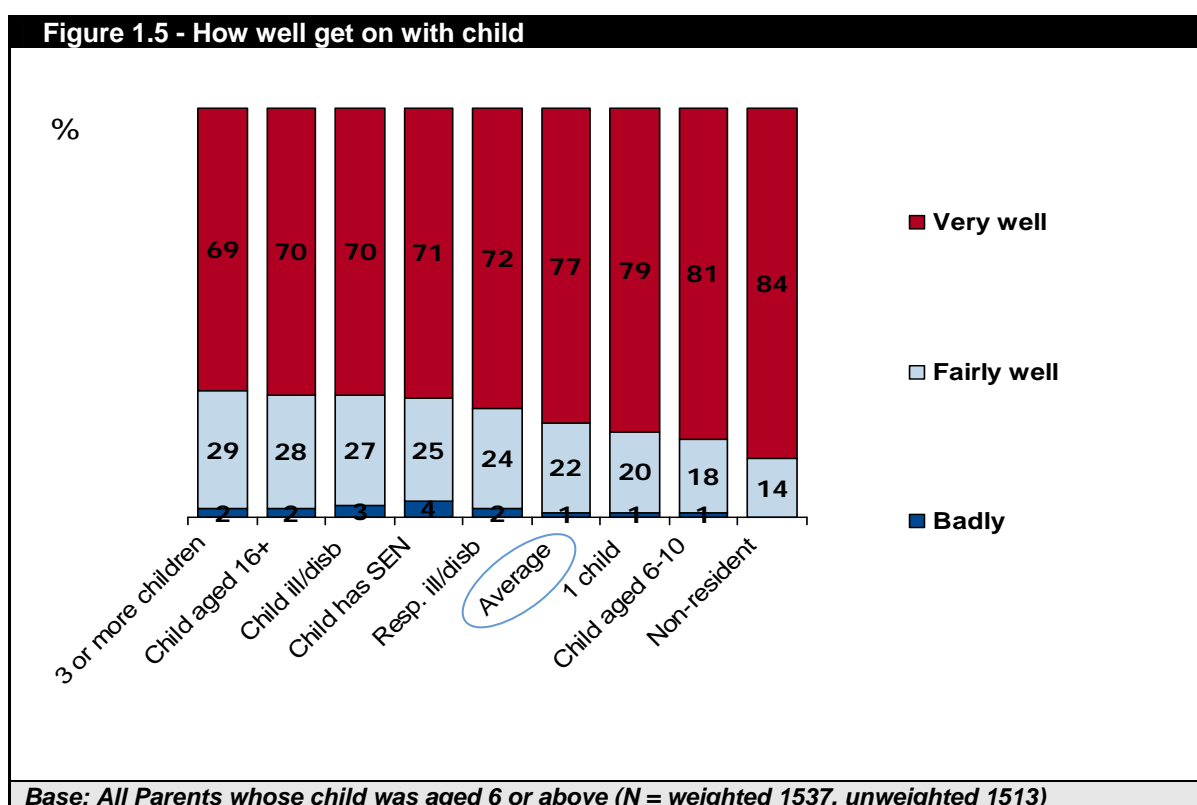
## 1.5 Frequency of Arguing

95. Figure 1.4 shows that over a third (36 per cent) of parents argued with their child either most days or more than once a week. The proportion doing so increased amongst parents of children aged 6-10 (47 per cent) and non-working parents (38 per cent).
96. The amount of time parents spend with their children also appears to influence frequency of arguing. Parents who said they spent too much time with their child were more likely than average to say they argue with their child on most days (29 per cent). As might be expected, non-resident parents (who are less likely to see their children) were least likely to argue with their child (10 per cent did so most days or more than once a week). Parents of young people aged 16 or above were also less likely than average to argue on a frequent basis (26 per cent).



## 1.6 Relationship with child

97. Almost all parents (99 per cent) said they got on well with their child with just over three quarters (77 per cent) saying they got on very well and a further 22 per cent fairly well. This puts some of the previous findings into context and while over a third of parents reported arguing with their children most days or more than once a week, nearly all parents reported positive relationships with their children.
98. Figure 1.5 shows that the age of the child influenced relationships. Parents of children aged 6-10<sup>10</sup> were most likely to say they got on very well (81 per cent) and there was a gradual decline for parents of older children to 70 per cent of those with a child aged 16 or above. Related to this, frustration levels were above average for parents of older children and confidence was also lower for parents of children aged 16 or over.
99. Illness or disability and SEN also had an impact on relationships. Ill or disabled parents (72 per cent) and those with ill or disabled children (70 per cent) or children with SEN (71 per cent) were less likely than average to get on very well. Similarly, parents of children with SEN or an illness/disability were more likely than average to say they struggle to control their child's behaviour (20 per cent and 27 per cent respectively versus 13 per cent average).



<sup>10</sup> The survey question was only asked to parents of children aged six and older

## **1.7 Behaviour problems affecting mental health of parents**

- 100. Eleven per cent of parents said problems with their child had affected their mental health in the previous 12 months. It is important to note that these findings relate to parents' reported perceptions and do not necessarily imply causality.
- 101. Parents of children with SEN or an illness / disability were more likely than average to say this (24 per cent and 21 per cent respectively) as were parents who themselves had an illness or disability (22 per cent). This might be explained by these parenting groups being less likely to get on well with their child (see above).
- 102. Parents who were not working (18 per cent) and lone parents (17 per cent) were also more likely than average to say problems with their child had affected their mental health in the last 12 months.

## **1.8 Family rows and tensions**

- 103. Following on from findings in section 1.5, one in five parents said problems with their child had led to major family arguments in the previous 12 months and 36 per cent said they had caused tensions between them and their partner. The survey did not follow up on the nature of such arguments or problems with children and these findings therefore need to be treated with an element of caution, in light of other more positive findings about parent and child relationships (see section 1.6).
- 104. Child SEN and illness or disabilities (amongst both parents and children) were again determining factors. Parents of children with SEN or illness / disability were more likely than average to say problems had led to tension with their partner (both 43 per cent), while ill or disabled parents and those whose child had SEN were more likely than average to have had major family rows (26 per cent and 35 per cent respectively).

## **1.9 Managing behaviour - Special Educational Needs**

- 105. The PICE survey highlights various sub-group differences that have impacts on measures of parental involvement and communication, but some of the strongest impacts and most consistent differences were found in respect of parents of children with SEN.
- 106. To set this in context, the SEN Code of Practice (2001)<sup>11</sup> acknowledges the pressure that parents of pupils with SEN can come under. It recognises that parents need support to gain confidence in making their thoughts known to staff and it emphasises the importance of parental involvement in their children's education. Among its many themes, the Code of Practice aims to promote a climate of co-operation and participation between parents and school, enabling pupils with SEN to achieve their potential.
- 107. Further to the above, the Lamb Inquiry<sup>12</sup> recommended changes in the area of communication and engagement with parents - "We need to ensure that parents can access the information that they need, when they need it, in ways that are convenient to them and that include face-to-face discussion with those who are working with their child". The Inquiry described how gaps in information had a significant impact on parental confidence.

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<sup>11</sup> Special Educational Needs: Code of Practice: 2001 (DfES /581 / 2001)

<sup>12</sup> The Lamb Inquiry: Special Educational Needs and Parental Confidence, 2009, [www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/lambinquiry/)

108. The PICE survey found that parents of children with statements of SEN were more likely to feel a heightened sense of involvement in their child's education. The survey also showed a clear desire for parents of children with SEN to become more involved in their children's schooling. Parental involvement is examined in further detail in Chapter 2 and comparisons are made between the surveys. However, it is important to summarise some important findings in relation to SEN and behaviour. Parents of children with SEN were more likely than average to:
- Argue with their children at increased frequency (47 per cent argued with their child most days or more than once a week - versus 36 per cent average);
  - Get on less well with their children (68 per cent said they got on with their child very well - versus 76 per cent average);
  - Have problems with their child's obedience (21 per cent disagreed that their child was generally obedient - versus eight per cent average);
  - Struggle to control their child's behaviour (27 per cent agreed that they struggled to control their child's behaviour - versus 14 per cent average);
  - Experience behaviour problems which have affected their mental health (12 per cent said their mental health had been affected very often or a fair amount in the last 12 months - versus four per cent average);
  - Experience tension with their partners (18 per cent had experienced tension with their partner very often or a fair amount in the last 12 months - versus eight per cent average); and
  - Experience major family rows (14 per cent had experienced major family rows very often or a fair amount in the last 12 months - versus five per cent average).
109. Parents of children with SEN were the most likely to have used support services to obtain information and advice on behaviour issues (e.g. anti-social behaviour, bullying, and discipline). A fifth (20 per cent) had used support services in this area compared with nine per cent of parents whose children did not have SEN.
110. The PICE survey and this research provide a strong message about some of the specific challenges and possible information needs that parents of children with SEN have.
111. The research does not examine type of SEN in more detail. SEN cover a broad spectrum of needs and it is possible that the behaviour challenges of some parents will be very different to others. This is likely to be related to the precise needs and age of the child. Further research would be needed to unpack this further.

### **1.10 Managing behaviour - lone parents**

112. The data also indicate some important findings related to lone parents. More specifically, lone parents were more likely than average to:
- Face a struggle dealing with their child's behaviour (18 per cent). Female lone parents were particularly likely to face a struggle (20 per cent versus 12 per cent of male lone parents);

- Only get involved in behaviour management when their child has done something really serious (31 per cent said this 'always applies' - versus 24 per cent average); and
113. Mothers were also more likely than fathers to experience behaviour problems which have affected their mental health. Seven per cent of fathers had experienced an adverse affect on their health<sup>13</sup> compared with 14 per cent of mothers. Once again, it is important to note that these findings relate to parents' reported perceptions and do not necessarily imply causality.
114. DCSF analyses of the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) data show that children from single parent families have lower levels of attainment than other families. However, much of this underachievement is compounded by income (i.e. lone parents are poorer than other families). The Parental Opinion Survey data show that this is also the case (i.e. lone parents do have lower incomes). However, this does not explain some of the above differences. For instance, in comparison to other families, lone parents on higher incomes still cite higher than average levels of frustration, and are more likely to report getting involved in behaviour management only when their child has done something really serious.
115. The above findings do seem to indicate that lone parents face particular challenges which affect their perceived ability to manage their child's behaviour. Furthermore, lone parents were more likely than other families (12 versus nine per cent) to have used support services to obtain information and advice on behaviour issues (e.g. anti-social behaviour, bullying, and discipline).

### **1.11 Creating a Confidence Index**

116. From the survey results a Confidence Index has been created, providing a measure of overall parental confidence. It has been created using statistical processes to establish a number of themes (i.e. dimensions) related to parental confidence, such as confidence when having to deal with the poor behaviour of a child. Question items were chosen to represent each of these themes with a numerical value applied to the response given at each question (the more the response was associated with high confidence the higher the value given). The values were then combined for each parent (based on the answers they had given at each of these questions) giving an overall 'score' of parental confidence. A higher score indicated higher confidence.
117. The lowest possible score that could be achieved in theory was 18 and the highest was 98. In practice, 35 was the lowest achieved score by a parent and 94 the highest for this wave of the survey. The mean average score achieved was 69.<sup>14</sup> The confidence index (and mean average score) may be used over time to monitor whether or not levels of confidence are subject to change. It may also be used on a cross-sectional basis (in each year of the Parental Opinion Survey), to examine how confidence varies between different sub-groups (e.g. age, gender - see below).

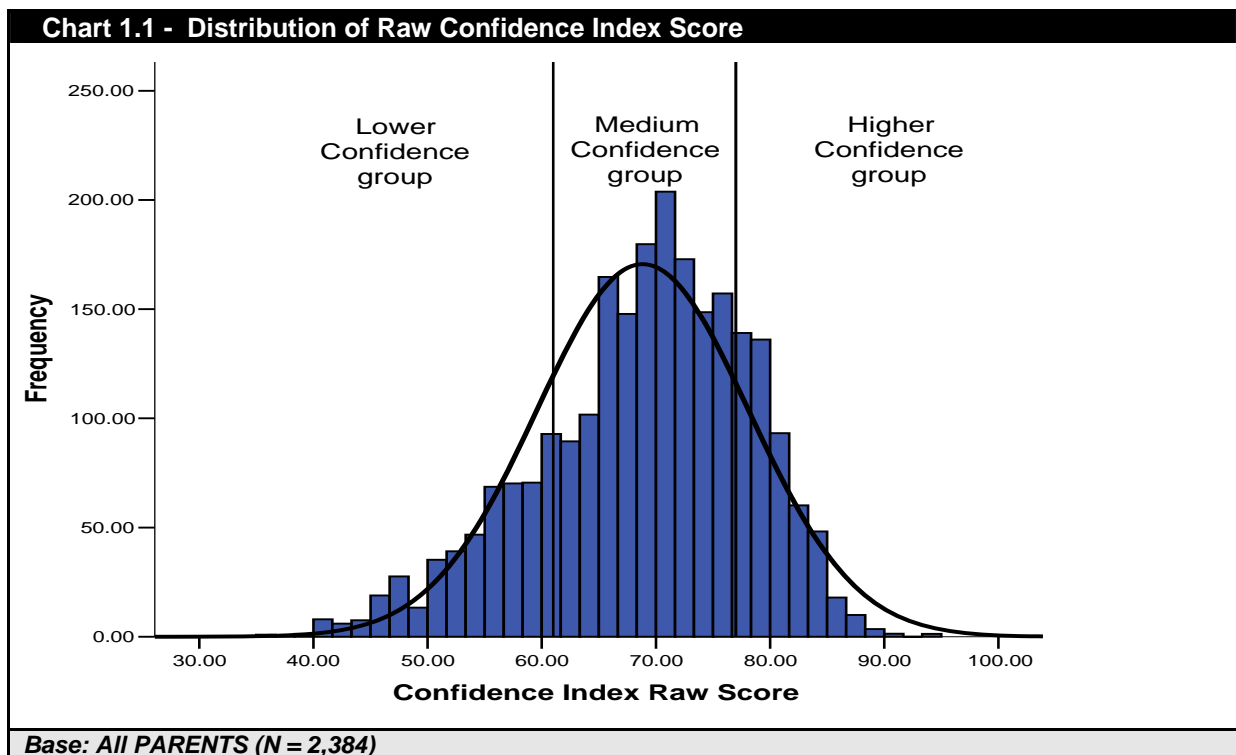
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<sup>13</sup> Defined as problems which had affected their mental health very often, a fair amount or occasionally in the last 12 months

<sup>14</sup> Any movement of the average score by around +/- 1 in either direction at future waves of the survey may mean a statistically significant shift (at the 95 per cent confidence level) in parental confidence.

118. Respondents were also allocated into one of the following groups based on their 'score':
- 'Lower' confidence: The score range for parents in this group was between 35 and 61;
  - 'Medium' confidence: The score range for parents in this group was between 62 and 76;
  - 'Higher' confidence: The score range for parents in this group was between 77 and 94.
119. The above groupings were constructed to ensure there were adequate numbers in each group for in-depth sub-group analysis, whilst also making sure that the overriding majority of parents appeared in the Medium confidence group. In total, 20 per cent of parents were allocated to the lower confidence group, 60 per cent to the medium confidence group and 20 per cent to the higher confidence group. This split was not created based on any pre-existing concepts and it should *not* be assumed that 20 per cent of all parents are low in confidence or that 20 per cent of all parents are high in confidence. The data have been grouped in this way for analysis purposes.

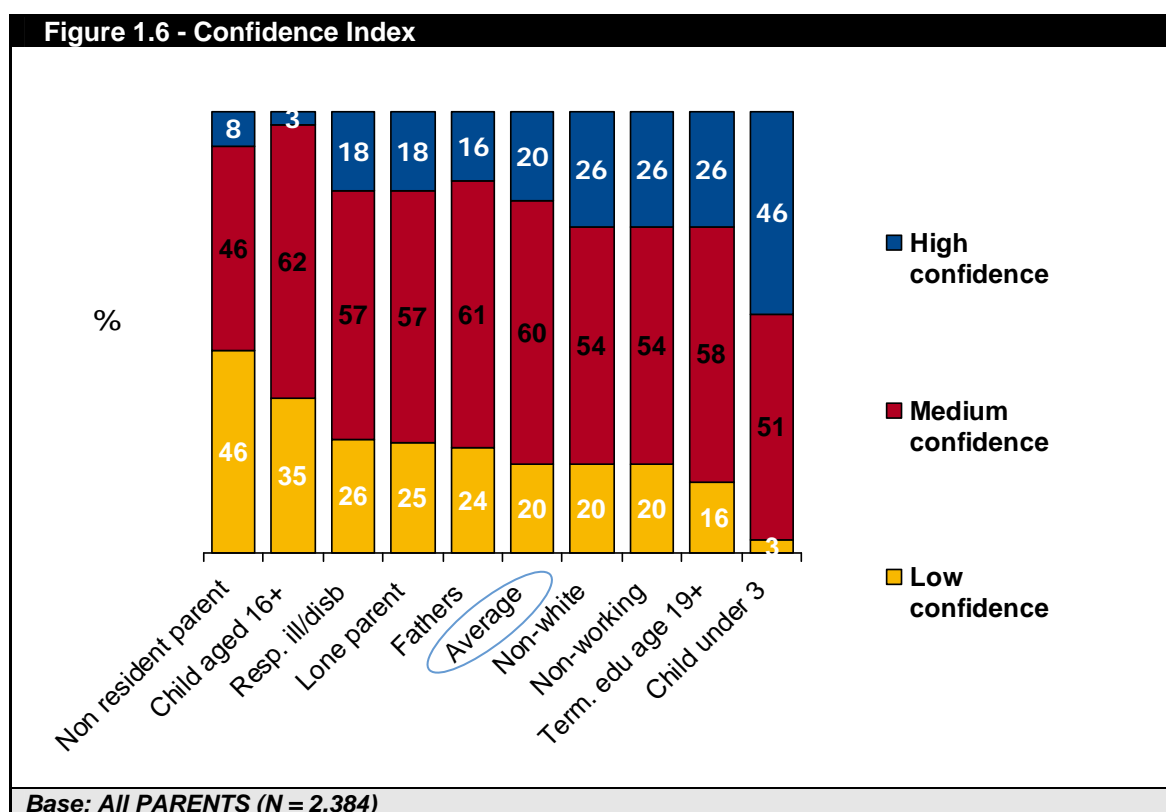
Chart 1.1 illustrates the raw Confidence Index score applied to all respondents, showing the frequency distribution split between the Lower, Medium and Higher confidence groups.



Further details of the index can be found in Appendix I.

120. This index provides a general indicator of overall parental confidence taking into account a number of themes relating to parenting. It does not provide an indicator of parenting confidence in specific areas such as confidence when with / caring for child or confidence when contacting child's school (although these will have been taken into account when creating the index). For instance, section 1.2 has shown that parents of older children were more confident when caring for their children although parents of younger children were more likely than parents of older children to fall into the higher confidence group.

121. Figure 1.6 shows that age of child was a notable factor determining high confidence and parents of children aged under three were most likely to appear in the higher confidence group (46 per cent), while only three per cent of parents of young people aged 16 or above were highly confident. The number of children in the household was also an influencing factor and parents with a child aged under three were less likely to fall into the higher confidence group if they had more than one child. Just over half of parents (53 per cent) with an only child aged under three were in the higher confidence group falling gradually to a third of parents with a child aged under three where at least two other children lived in the household.
122. The age parents finished full-time education also impacted on confidence. Parents who left the education system aged 19 or above were more likely than average to fall into this group (26 per cent). Non white respondents and those not working were also more likely to have high confidence (both 26 per cent).
123. In contrast, non-resident parents were most likely to appear in the lower confidence group (46 per cent). Similarly, lone parents and parents who themselves had an illness or disability were more likely than average to have low confidence (both 26 per cent), while fathers were more likely than mothers to fall into this group (24 per versus 16 per cent).



124. In order to recognise what characteristics of parents resulted in the largest differences in high parental confidence, CHAID<sup>15</sup> models were also constructed. CHAID modelling is a widely used and well established technique for advanced statistical analysis, which comprehensively searches to identify relationships within the data. It separates the data into statistically different groups, based on the probability of having a particular characteristic (such as level of education). Independent variables which were thought to affect whether a parent had 'high confidence' were entered into the CHAID models.

<sup>15</sup> Chi-Squared Automatic Interaction Detector



125. As mentioned earlier, respondents were allocated to one of three groups based on their confidence index 'score'. CHAID models were constructed which looked at the largest differences in the 'high confidence' group i.e. respondents in the top 20 per cent of the confidence index score.
126. A range of demonstrable variables were included in the models. These included gender; age; marital status; whether lone parent or part of a couple; terminal age of education; highest qualification achieved; working status; household income; number of children in household; age of reference child; Government Office Region; housing status; religion; whether child has special educational needs (SEN); whether child has a disability; whether parent themselves has a disability; whether English is first language of household; whether a non-resident parent; parental segment; and ethnic group.
127. A number of models were created which used different combinations of the above input variables. This was done to try to ensure consistency across models while also trying to find fewer visible patterns among different subgroups.

### **Age of child**

128. When all variables were entered into the model, the primary determinant of high parental confidence appeared to be the age of the reference child. Around half (53 per cent) of parents where the child was less than 3 years old and was the only child in the household were in the higher confidence group.
129. The older the reference child, the less likely the parent was to be in the higher confidence group. In particular, where the child was aged 16 or over and the parent was part of a couple (as opposed to being a lone parent), two per cent of this parental sub-group were in the higher confidence group.
130. The CHAID model also found some interesting findings related to the parental segments. These are summarised at the end of this chapter, alongside a wider discussion of the different segments. The next section looks at the wider implications of high confidence.

### **Gender**

131. Fathers were less likely to be in the higher confidence group (15 per cent) compared with mothers (23 per cent), although this difference was not as large as exhibited between other subgroups.
132. The CHAID analysis was able to further split mothers by their working status. Mothers who had finished their education at age 16 or earlier and were working full time were less likely to be in the higher confidence grouping (14 per cent). This compared with 20 per cent of mothers who had finished their education at age 16 or earlier but who were working part time or not working at all.
133. Fathers appeared to be less likely to be in the higher confidence group if there was more than one child in the household (12 per cent). Where there was only one child in the household fathers were more likely to be classed as high confidence (21 per cent).

## **Educational achievement**

134. Educational achievement was already shown to be an important determinant in distinguishing high confidence. Another result revealed by the CHAID analysis concerned parents with no disability themselves who were working part time or not working at all. Those whose highest qualification was A-level or equivalent were more likely to be in the higher confidence group compared with those with lower education attainment (29 per cent and 22 per cent respectively). Parents who themselves had a disability (who were working part time or not at all) were less likely than both of the previous groups to exhibit high confidence (17 per cent).

### **1.11.1 Implications of high confidence**

135. It is important to examine the impact that parental confidence has on other aspects of parenting, such as enjoyment of parenting, parental involvement and behaviour management. These areas are all addressed further below.

## **Enjoyment of parenting**

*Confident parents were more likely to enjoy parenting and find it less frustrating. They were more likely to be content with the amount of time they spent with their child.*

136. Respondents in the higher confidence group were more likely than average to say they found parenting rewarding 'most of the time' (92 versus 83 per cent average). They were also more likely to say they hardly ever or never found parenting frustrating (44 versus 33 per cent average).
137. Furthermore, they were more likely to say they spent about the right amount of time with their child (66 versus 61 per cent average). This was in contrast to those in the lower confidence group who were more likely to say they spent nowhere near enough time with their child (15 versus eight per cent average).

## **Involvement levels**

*Confident parents were more involved in their child's education.*

138. Highly confident parents were more likely than average to say they were very involved in their child's progress through nursery, school or college (66 versus 44 per cent average). They were also more likely to say that they were 'much more involved than their partner' (32 versus 25 per cent average). This is supported by their increased likelihood of helping their child with homework every day (26 versus 13 per cent average).

## **Behaviour management**

*Confident parents argued less with their children, faced fewer struggles managing behaviour and experienced less tension as a result of their children's behaviour.*

139. Highly confident parents were more likely than average to hardly ever argue with their child (40 versus 35 per cent average) or struggle to control their child's behaviour (77 per cent disagreed that they struggled compared with 67 per cent average).
140. They were also more likely to say their child's behaviour had not caused tension between them and their partner (57 versus 49 per cent average) or led to any major family rows in the last 12 months (80 versus 73 per cent average).

141. In summary, parental confidence has a number of wider benefits. While many efforts focus on raising involvement levels amongst parents, some parents may lack the necessary confidence to engage fully with their child's education and learning. In some cases, parents may require help to build their confidence or self-esteem. The policy challenge is to find the most appropriate support for parents.
142. Further analysis using the confidence index is included in subsequent sections, where appropriate.

## 1.12 Segmentation - Key Findings

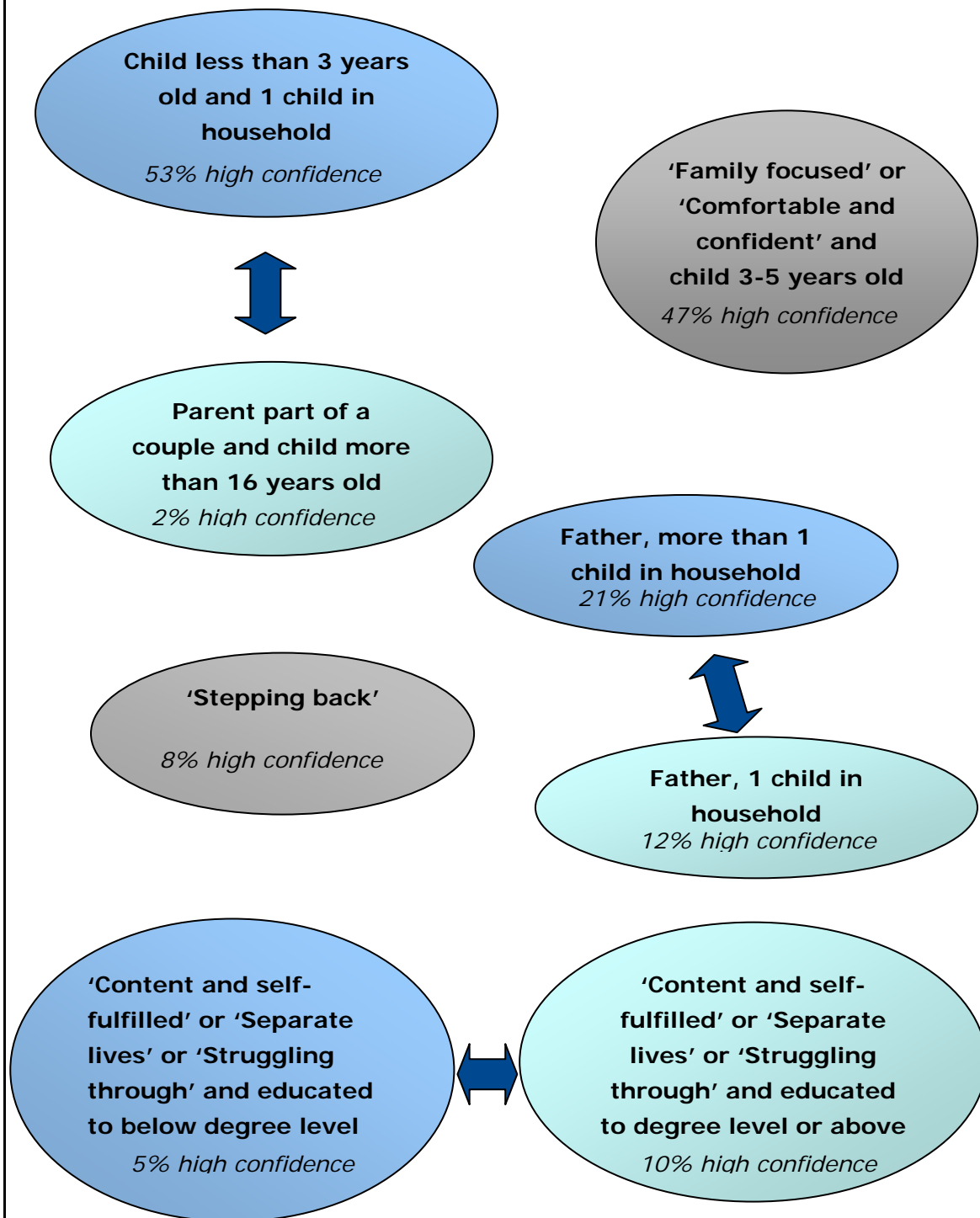
| Dimension   | The Segments               | %  | Summary  |
|---|----------------------------|----|--|
| <b>Confident caring for child</b>   | <i>Average</i>             | 94 | <p>Nearly all respondents in the comfortable and confident, relaxed and caring and content and self-fulfilled segments were confident when caring for their child.</p> <p>Although still relatively high, levels of confidence were significantly lower for the struggling through segment - 83 per cent.</p> <p>Interventions may be needed amongst this segment to help build confidence and self-esteem (relative to other more confident parents).</p>   |
|   | Struggling through         | 83 |  |
|   | Committed but discontented | 89 |  |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 98 |  |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 99 |  |
| <b>High overall confidence (derived from confidence index) - See Figure 1.7 below for further details</b> | <i>Average</i>             | 20 | <p>The segment with the lowest proportion of parents in the high confidence group was the content and self-fulfilled. However, it is worth noting that this segment was most likely to have older children. Earlier findings have suggested that age of child is a key driver of confidence and it is interesting to note that the other segments with lower confidence (stepping back and separate lives) were also more likely than average to have older children.</p> <p>Further support may be needed to help build confidence amongst parents of older children.</p> |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 3  |  |
|   | Stepping back              | 8  |  |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 34 |  |
|   | Family focused             | 37 |  |
| <b>Self rating as parent (Not very good / has trouble)</b>  | <i>Average</i>             | 4  | <p>Further to the above, whilst the content and self-fulfilled segment lacked confidence, nearly all perceived themselves to be 'good' parents.</p> <p>The struggling through and committed but discontented segments were more likely to perceive their own parenting skills in a less positive light.</p>  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | *  |  |
|   | Family focused             | 1  |  |
|   | Committed but discontented | 10 |  |
|   | Struggling through         | 15 |  |
| <b>High frequency arguing with child</b>  | <i>Average</i>             | 36 | <p>There was a large degree of variation between the segments in terms of how frequently they argued with their children.</p> <p>In particular, over a half (52 per cent) of the struggling through segment argued with their child every day or more than once week, as did over two fifths of parents in the supportive but frustrated and stepping back segments.</p>   |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 20 |  |
|   | Family focused             | 21 |  |
|   | Stepping back              | 43 |  |
|   | Struggling through         | 52 |  |

|   |                            |    |   |
|---|----------------------------|----|---|
| <b>Struggle to control child behaviour</b>                            | <i>Average</i>             | 14 | <p>As well as engaging in high frequency arguing, the stepping back and struggling through segments were also more likely to agree that they struggled to control their child's behaviour. Nearly a quarter (23 per cent) of the committed but discontented segment also said this was the case.</p> <p>These parents may require additional help with behaviour management strategies and support.</p>   |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 6  |   |
|   | Family focused             | 8  |   |
|   | Struggling through         | 21 |   |
|   | Committed but discontented | 23 |   |
| <b>Frequent tension with partner (as a result of child behaviour)</b> | <i>Average</i>             | 7  | <p>Problems with behaviour management impact on other areas such as relationship tensions. The struggling through and stepping back segments were also most likely to cite frequent tension with their partner. In addition, over one in 10 (12 per cent) of the relaxed and caring segment mentioned such difficulties.</p>  |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 3  |   |
|   | Family focused             | 4  |   |
|   | Stepping back              | 12 |   |
|   | Struggling through         | 14 |   |
| <b>Find parenting rewarding most of the time</b>                      | <i>Average</i>             | 84 | <p>As well as reporting more difficulties with behaviour management, the stepping back and struggling through segments were least likely to find parenting rewarding. In contrast, most parents in the content and self-fulfilled and comfortable and confident segments expressed satisfaction.</p>  |
|   | Stepping back              | 69 |   |
|   | Struggling through         | 74 |   |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 92 |   |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 93 |   |
| <b>Find parenting frustrating most of the time</b>                    | <i>Average</i>             | 10 | <p>Around one in five of the struggling through, committed but discontented and supportive but frustrated segments said they found parenting frustrating 'most of the time'.</p> <p>There are some consistent messages appearing for the segments. More specifically, the struggling through segment faces a number of challenges in terms of managing their children's behaviour. This has various impacts in terms of their relationships with partners and their wider enjoyment of parenting. They and other groups (such as the stepping back, committed but discontented and supportive but frustrated) may need further support to address some of these issues.</p> |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | *  |   |
|   | Family focused             | *  |   |
|   | Committed but discontented | 19 |   |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 21 |   |

## **Segmentation - Confidence Index**

143. The CHAID analysis also drew attention to the segments as a key differentiator of parental confidence. In particular, nearly half (47 per cent) of parents whose child was aged 3-5 and in either the 'Family focused' or 'Comfortable and confident' segments were in the higher confidence group.
144. The CHAID process can be useful in grouping subgroups which initially do not appear that similar. Some of the segments were grouped in this way. In particular, 'Supportive but frustrated' and 'Committed but discontented' were grouped together as having a similar proportion of those with high confidence. There was a clear distinction between younger parents within this grouping (35 years old or less) compared with older parents (over 45 years of age). The younger parents were five times as likely as the older parents to be in the high confidence grouping (31 per cent and six per cent respectively). This result might be expected since age of parent would be positively correlated with age of reference child and it has already been shown that the older the reference child, the less likely the parent was to be in the higher confidence group.
145. However, one result which sits independently of this looks at parents with children aged between 6 and 10. The CHAID analysis indicated that there was a difference between parents in this group by how old they were. Younger parents (35 years old or less) were twice as likely to be in the higher confidence group compared with parents over 35 years of age (27 per cent and 14 per cent respectively).
146. The 'Stepping Back' segment was identified as being least likely to exhibit high confidence; eight per cent of this segment were in the high confidence group. The segment as a whole was characterised by a lower proportion of those with high confidence, and subgroups within it were not noticeably different from each other.
147. Other segments which had a low proportion of parents with high confidence were the 'Content and self-fulfilled', 'Separate lives' and 'Struggling through' segments, which had been grouped together automatically in the modelling process. What separated this group of segments from the 'Stepping Back' segment was that there was found to be a difference among parents of different education levels within the group. Those whose highest level of education was below degree level were half as likely to be in the higher confidence group compared with those educated to degree level or above (five per cent and ten per cent respectively).

**Figure 1.7 - Proportions of various subgroups of parents that are 'high confidence'**



Note: the total sample of parents was split into 3 groups comprising low, medium and high levels of confidence. The split was conducted using criteria of the lowest 20 per cent, the middle 60 per cent and highest 20 per cent of the confidence index score respectively.

## 2 Perceived Ability of Parents to Support Child's Learning

### Key Findings

- Eighty seven per cent of parents felt involved in their child's progress through school life. Levels of involvement were lower than average for fathers, parents aged under 25, parents with three or more children and parents working full time.
- Involvement was highest amongst mothers, part time workers and parents of children with an illness or disability. Parents of children with a statement of SEN were most likely to feel *very* involved.
- Mothers were five times more likely than fathers to say they were most involved in their child's school life (i.e. more involved than their partner). A third of parents said that they and their partner were equally involved in their child's schooling.
- Most parents (91 per cent) felt confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development. Confidence was lowest amongst parents who did not speak English as their first language, non-resident parents and those who left the education system at an early age (15 years old or younger).
- The age of the child was an important factor affecting parental confidence in helping children with homework. Confidence was highest amongst parents of children under 10 (89 per cent). Parents of children in lower school years were also most likely to help their child with homework.
- Nearly half (46 per cent) of full-time working parents felt that they did not spend enough time with their children. Fathers, parents of children with SEN and non-resident parents were the least positive about the amount of time they spent with their child.
- Many parents who claimed to be less involved in their child's schooling expressed a desire for more involvement in the future. For example, while the majority of fathers (62 per cent) were happy with their level of involvement, significantly more fathers than mothers said they wanted to be more involved (37 versus 27 per cent).

### 2.1 Introduction

148. This section focuses on parents' perceived ability to support their child's learning. It focuses on involvement in learning and education at the home and at school.
149. The benefits of parental involvement in a child's education have long been recognised. Parents play a crucial role in influencing the aspirations and achievements of their children. Desforges (2003)<sup>16</sup> has demonstrated a large body of evidence which points to the link between a parent's involvement in a child's learning and a child's subsequent achievement.

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<sup>16</sup> 2003, Desforges, C with Abouuchaar, A: The Impact of Parental Involvement, Parental Support and Family Education on Pupil Achievements and Adjustment: A Literature Review, Department for Education and Skills



150. In this section, we draw particular attention to comparisons with other surveys such as PICE. We examine consistent trends and new evidence. Alongside Chapter 1, this section sets the context for the later chapters on access to parental information and advice and confidence in support services.
151. This section explores the following confidence themes:
- Do parents feel able to support their child's learning at school?
  - Do parents feel able to support their child's learning at home?
  - Are schools doing enough to engage parents?
152. There are further measures related to the core theme of parents' ability to support their child's learning. These are addressed in Chapters 3 and 4, which focus on information and support services:
- Have schools engaged parents? How often? (*covered in Chapter 4*)
  - Do parents have information and support needed in their role as parents as partners in their children's education? (*covered in Chapter 3*)

## **2.2 Do parents feel able to support their child's learning at school?**

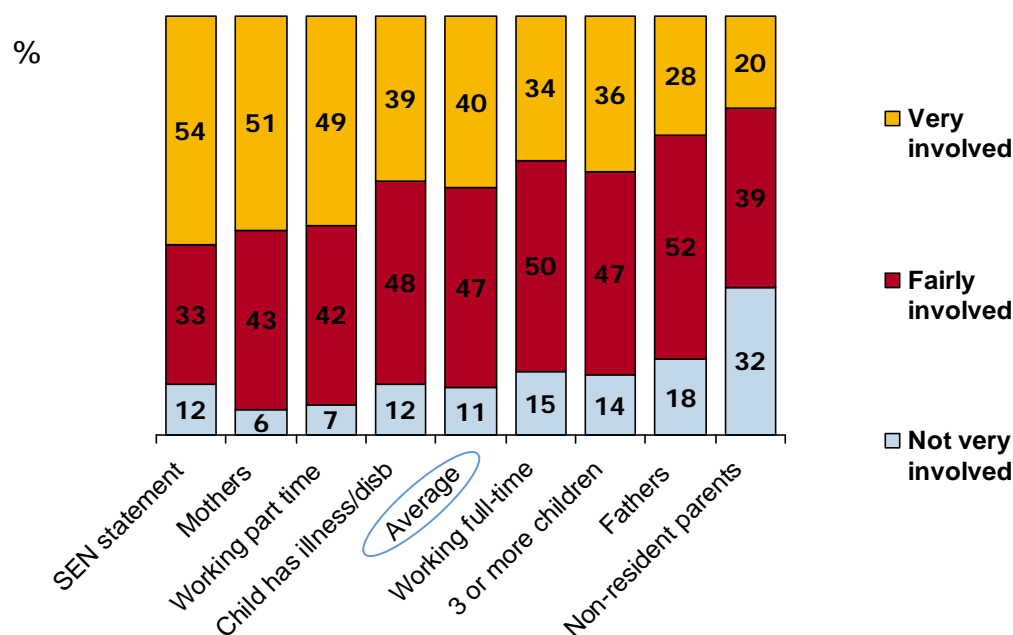
### **2.2.1 Involvement in child's progress through school<sup>17</sup> life**

153. Figure 2.1 shows perceived involvement levels amongst parents. Lowest levels of involvement were to be found amongst non-resident parents (42 per cent said they were not involved). Although more involved than non-resident parents, involvement was lower than average for fathers (20 per cent not involved), parents under 25 (18 per cent not involved), parents with three or more children (16 per cent not involved) and parents working full time (16 per cent not involved).
154. Involvement was highest amongst mothers, part time workers and parents of children with an illness or disability. Further analysis shows that parents of children with a statement of SEN were most likely to feel very involved (54 per cent). This is consistent with the PICE survey, which uncovered the same finding. It is interesting to note that parents of children with SEN (but no statement) were no more likely than average to be very involved (40 per cent). As the PICE survey also indicates, it is the presence of a statement that heightens parents' sense of involvement. The presence of a statement may trigger various consultations with the parent, adding to this sense of involvement.

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<sup>17</sup> Depending on the age and status of the child, the question referred to school, nursery or college

**Figure 2.1 - Level of involvement in child's progress through school life**

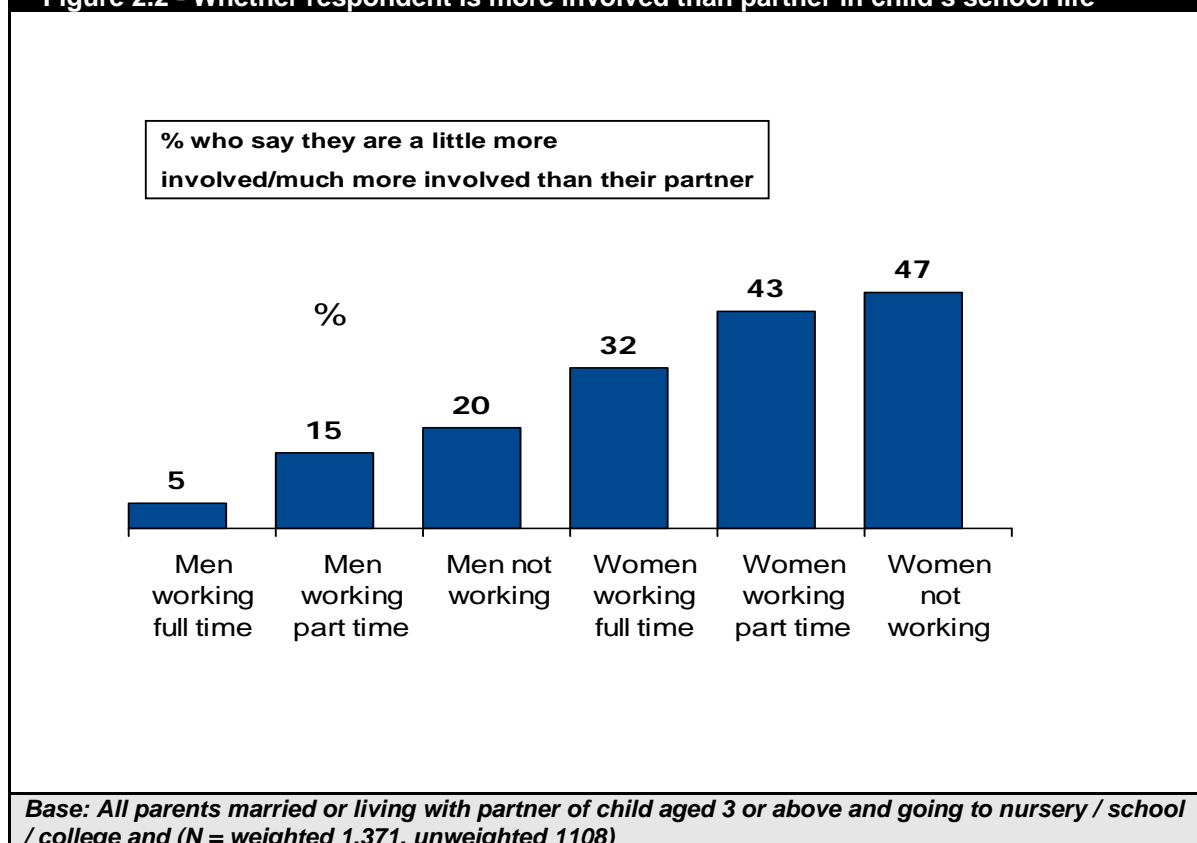


*Base: All parents of child aged 3 or above and going to nursery / school / college (N = weighted 1,801, unweighted 1789)*

## 2.2.2 Engaging fathers

155. The Think Fathers Campaign was launched in November 2008 by the DCSF in association with a range of partners to encourage public, health and family services to be more 'dad-friendly' and inclusive of fathers. It also seeks to increase the role that fathers can play in their children's education.
156. When asked who was most involved in their child's school life - them or their partner, very few fathers said they were most involved. Mothers were five times more likely to say they were most involved. A third of parents said that they and their partner were equally involved in their child's schooling.
157. It is important to unpack some of the reasons for the lower levels of involvement amongst fathers. More specifically, it is necessary to see whether it is gender or working patterns that is driving perceptions of involvement. Fathers are more likely than mothers to be in full-time paid work, but this is not the most important reason. As figure 2.2 shows, 32 per cent of women working full-time said they were most involved compared with five per cent of full-time working men.
158. Section 2.4 also shows that significantly more fathers than mothers want to be more involved in their child's schooling.

**Figure 2.2 - Whether respondent is more involved than partner in child's school life**



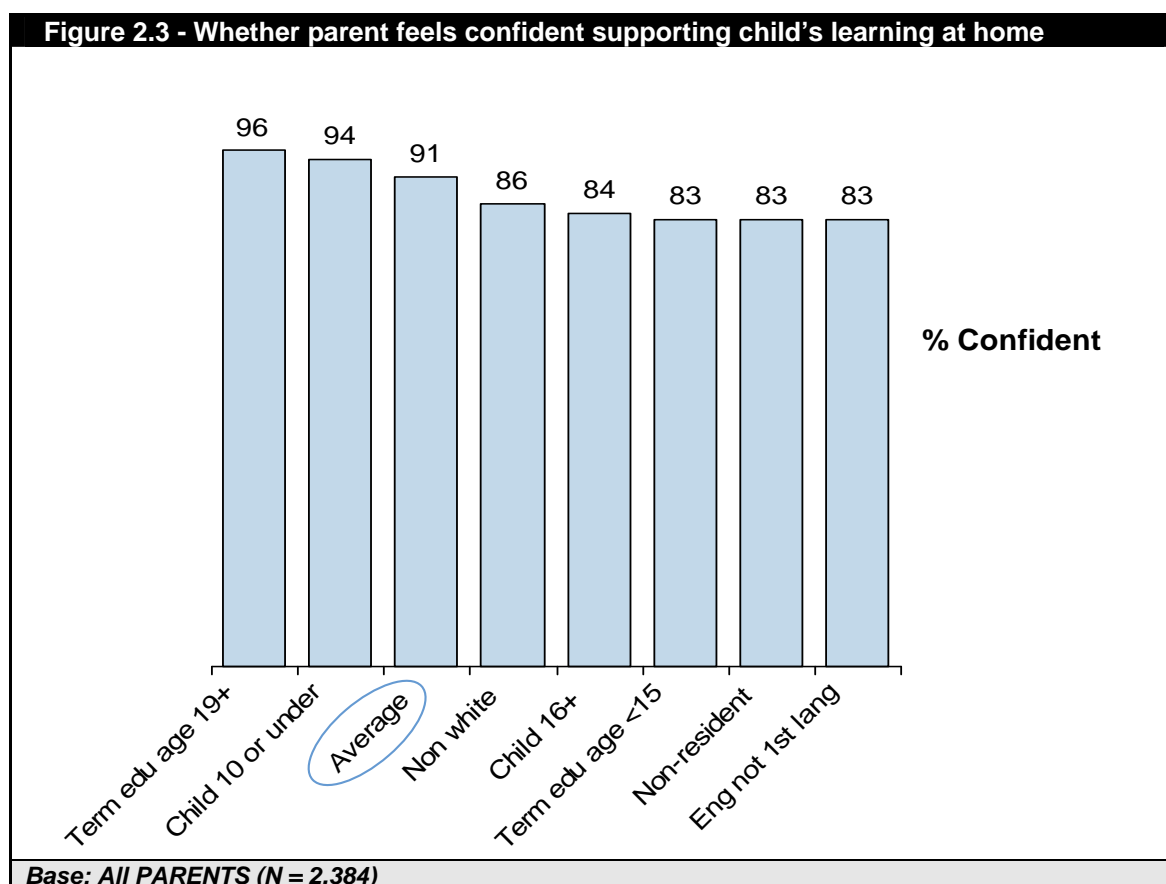
159. The PICE survey uncovered similar findings. This consistent message underlines the extent of the differences between mothers and fathers.
160. All respondents were also asked to express their level of agreement to a number of statements about the role of mothers and fathers. Although fathers were less likely to feel involved, there were no gender differences to the responses given to these statements. More specifically, equal proportions agreed that:
- fathers are less involved in their children's learning than mothers (49 per cent of fathers versus 47 per cent of mothers agreed);
  - there are fewer opportunities for fathers to get involved in their children's learning than there are for mothers (34 per cent of fathers versus 37 per cent of mothers agreed); and
  - it is more difficult for fathers to get involved in their children's learning than it is for mothers (37 per cent of fathers versus 38 per cent of mothers agreed).

## **2.3 Do parents feel able to support their child's learning at home?**

### **2.3.1 Confidence supporting child's learning and development**

161. Most parents (91 per cent) felt confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development. Confidence increased to 96 per cent amongst those with more experience of the education system (terminal education age of 19 or older). Similarly, confidence was higher than average (94 per cent) amongst parents of younger children (10 or under).

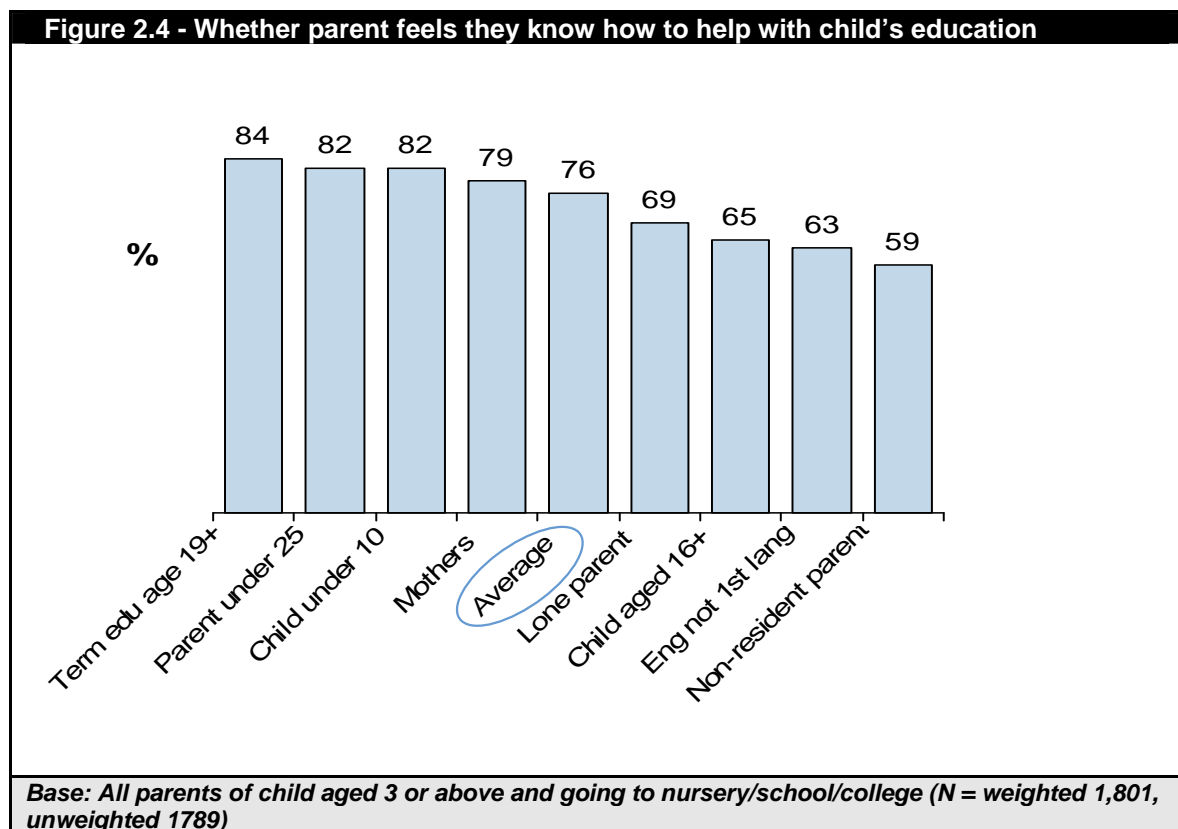
162. Figure 2.3 shows that confidence was lowest amongst parents who did not speak English as their first language, non-resident parents and those who left the education system at an early age (15 years old or younger). Eighty three per cent of parents across each of these subgroups felt confident. Although this still indicates high levels of confidence overall, the relative differences between these and (more confident) other sub-groups is large. This suggests that any interventions to improve confidence might focus on these groups.
163. These findings are consistent with those reported in section 1.2., which show that parents who do not speak English as their first language are significantly less likely to 'feel confident when caring for their child'. These parents may need further help and encouragement to support their child's learning.
164. Non-white parents were also less likely than average (86 per cent) to feel confident. Similar to the earlier findings reported in section 1.2, this is heavily driven by language. More specifically, confidence levels of non-white parents who do speak English as their first language, increased to 91 per cent. Further research may be needed to explore the impact of language as a barrier to parental involvement and support.



### 2.3.2 Knowledge of how to help with child's education

165. Following on from the findings above on the confidence of parents to help with learning and development, parents were also asked to what extent they agreed with the statement 'I know a lot about how I can help with my child's education'.
166. Figure 2.4 highlights very similar results to these earlier findings. As well as having the lowest levels of confidence, non-resident parents and parents who did not speak English as their first language also responded with the lowest levels of perceived knowledge. In contrast, once again previous education experience and the age of the child had a

positive impact on knowledge levels. Mothers were also more likely than average to say they knew a lot about how to help with their child's education.



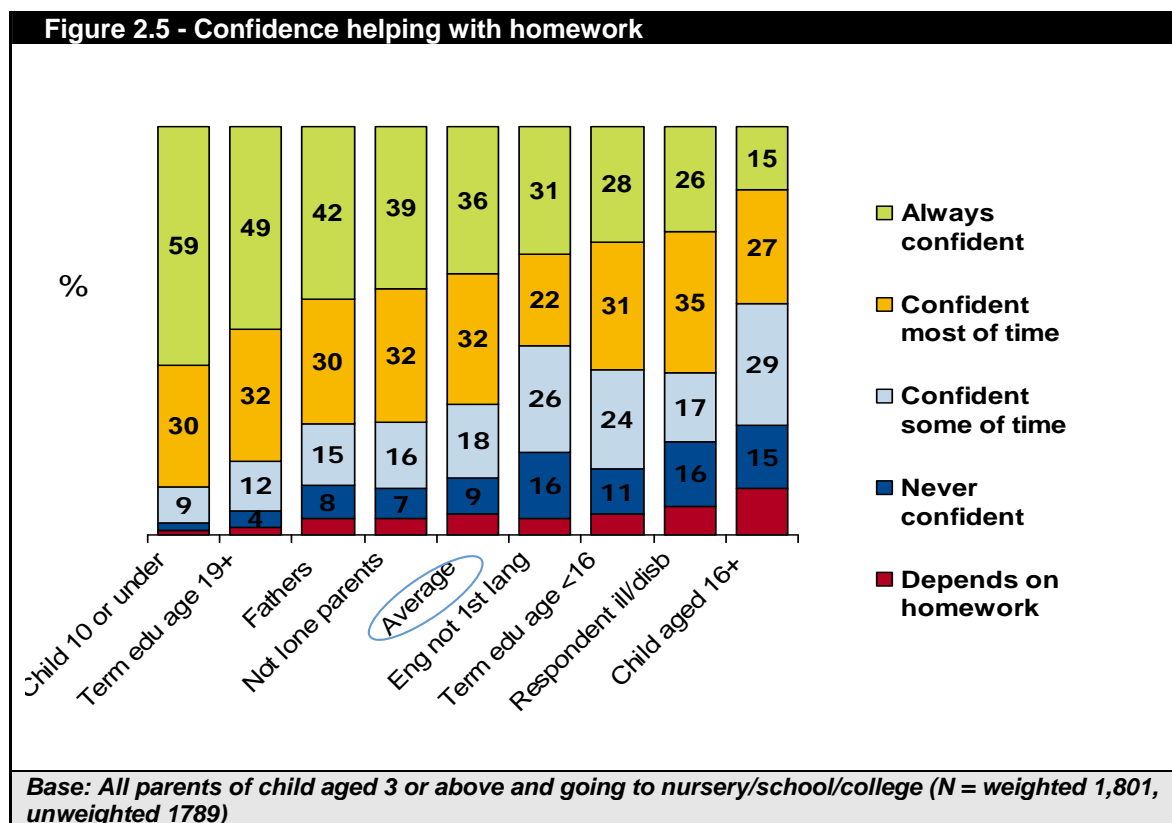
### 2.3.3 Helping children with homework

167. Compared with findings from the PICE survey, the data show a larger proportion of parents were 'never confident' helping their children with homework (nine versus one per cent). Some of this variation may be due to differences in the design of the two surveys. More specifically, PICE interviewed parents of children up to the age of 16, whereas this survey included parents of children up to the age of 19<sup>18</sup>. Related to this is the finding that confidence is heavily linked to age, with confidence decreasing alongside the increased age of the child. However, further analysis of the two surveys shows that even amongst the older school year groups, parents in this survey were less confident than those in the PICE survey. Ten per cent of parents of pupils in year 7-9 were never confident compared with two per cent in PICE; 15 per cent of parents of children in year 10-12 were never confident compared with three per cent in PICE.
168. There are also further differences at the other end of the spectrum. While overall confidence between the two surveys is the same (around two thirds of parents were always confident or confident most of the time), the proportion of parents in this survey who felt confident all of the time was higher (36 versus 19 per cent).
169. Figure 2.5 details various sub-group differences. As the chart shows, confidence was highest amongst parents of children under 10 (89 per cent). This finding is consistent with results from the PICE survey. In contrast, confidence was lowest for parents of children

<sup>18</sup> The interviewing mode (face-to-face versus telephone) and sampling approach (random probability sampling versus a form of random digit dialling) for the two surveys is also different, which may contribute to some of these differences.

aged 16 or over (42 per cent). This suggests that there may be scope for secondary schools to provide further information and support to parents who want to help their children with homework. Extended services in and around schools already include parenting classes and support that parents may be able to access. The Government's recent White Paper<sup>19</sup> provides a 'Parent Guarantee', which provides a commitment that every parent will have access to extended services, including support and parental advice by 2010.

170. Confidence was also lower than average for parents themselves who had an illness or disability, those who left the education system aged 16 or under and parents who do not speak English as their first language.



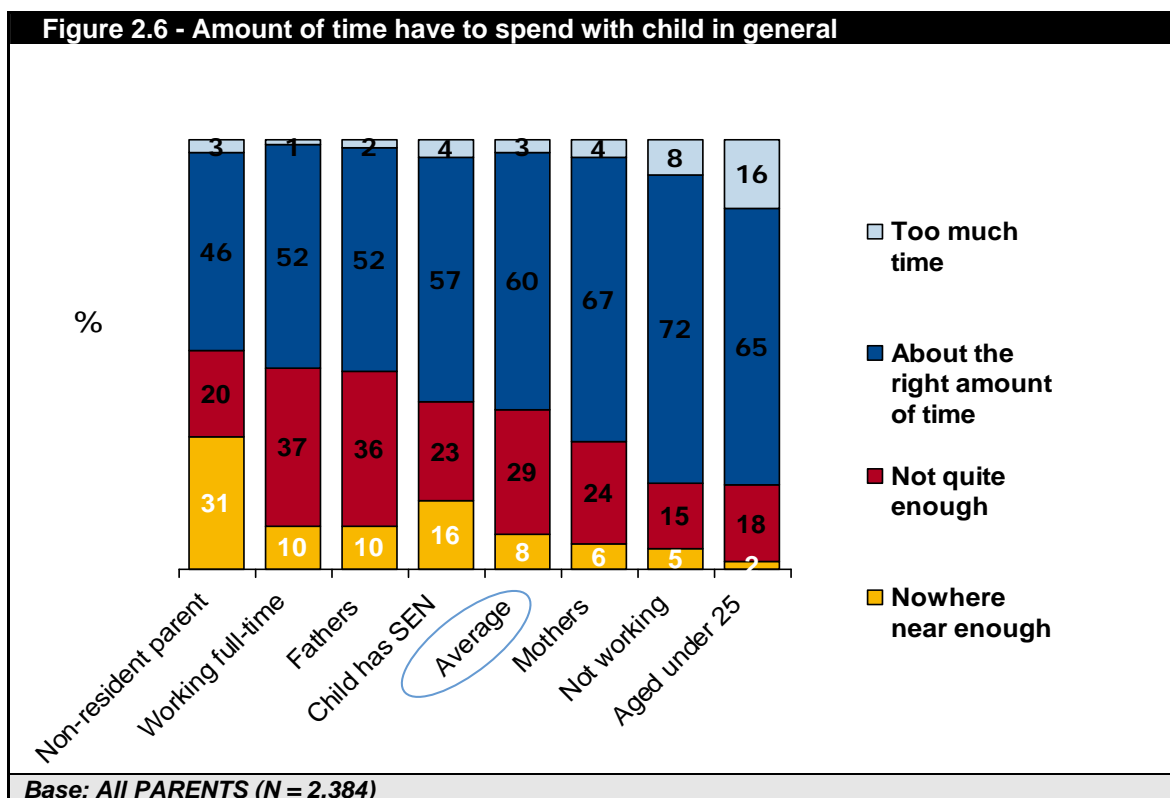
171. Consistent with ratings of confidence, the frequency of helping with homework is closely tied into which school year the child is in. Parents of children in lower school years were more likely than parents of children in later school years to help their child with homework (28 per cent of parents of children in key stage 1 helped their child every day, compared with 16 per cent in key stage 2, five per cent in key stage 3 and three per cent in key stage 4). These findings are consistent with PICE.
172. Mothers were more likely than fathers to help their child with homework every day (15 versus eight per cent).
173. As noted earlier, those who left the education system at an early age were less confident helping their child with homework. They were also less likely to provide help (nine per cent of parents who left the education system aged 16 or younger helped their child every day compared with 17 per cent of parents who left aged 19 or older).

<sup>19</sup> Your Child, Your Schools, Our Future: Building a 21st Century Schools System: June 2009

174. Frequency of helping with homework was also highest amongst parents not working or those working part time. However, there were some important gender differences. A fifth (21 per cent) of non-working mothers helped their child every day compared with nine per cent of non-working fathers.

### 2.3.4 Amount of time spend with child

175. The PICE research showed that one of the main barriers to parental involvement was lack of time. This was directly related to work, which was identified as the main barrier to greater involvement. As can be seen in figure 2.6, nearly half (47 per cent) of full-time working parents felt that they did not spend enough time with their children. Fathers (46 per cent) and parents of children with SEN (39 per cent) were also more likely than average to say that they did not spend enough time.
176. Although wanting to spend more time with their child may not always involve wanting to have more involvement with the child's school, it is interesting to note that parents who are least satisfied with their levels of contact (i.e. the groups above) are the parents most likely to seek more of this type of involvement - see section 2.4.1.
177. As might be expected, non-resident parents were the least positive about the amount of time they spent with their child. A third (31 per cent) said the time they spent with their child was nowhere near enough.
178. In contrast, 16 per cent of young parents (aged under 25) felt they spent too much time with their child. It is important to recognise that young parents have younger children, which in itself may require a more intensive period of parental involvement and care than in later years.

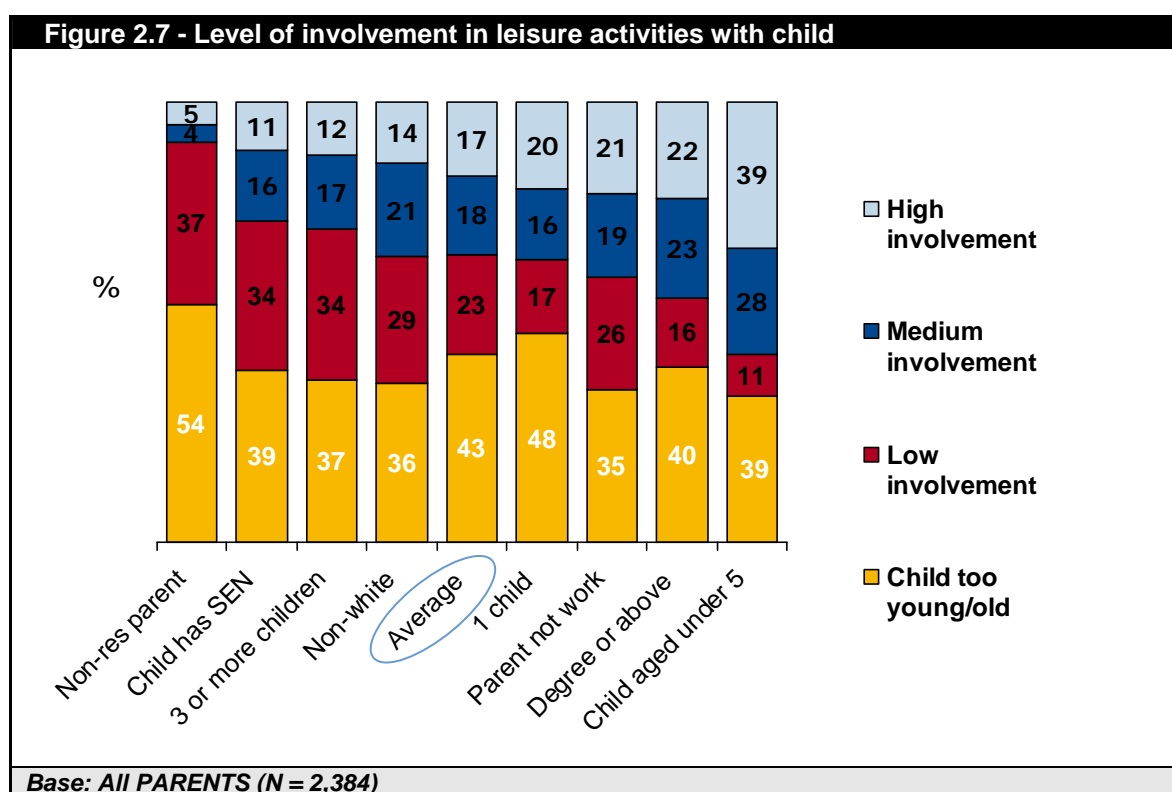


### 2.3.5 Level of involvement in day to day leisure activities with child

179. Respondents were asked for the amount of time they spent doing the following leisure activities with their child;
- reading,
  - musical activities,
  - sports or physically active games,
  - playing with games or toys indoors,
  - going to the park / outdoor playground.
180. For each activity respondents said they either did them on a daily, weekly, monthly basis, less frequently than this or never. Alternatively, respondents could say the activity did not apply because their child was too old or young.
181. By combining the responses given for each of the above activities it is possible to create a general measure of involvement in these leisure activities. Parents could then be placed into one of the following groups:
- *High involvement in leisure activities:* These respondents were involved in each activity up to several times a week. They accounted for 23 per cent of all respondents.
  - *Medium involvement in leisure activities:* These respondents tended to be involved in the leisure activities on a weekly basis. They accounted for 18 per cent of all respondents.
  - *Low involvement in leisure activities:* These respondents tended to be involved in the activities on an ad-hoc basis. They accounted for 23 per cent of all respondents.
  - *No involvement - child too old / young:* These respondents said they did not do at least one of the activities because their child was too old or young. They accounted for 43 per cent of all respondents.
182. Because of the nature of leisure activities included, age of child was a notable factor determining level of involvement and parents of children aged under 5 were most likely to fall into the high involvement group (39 per cent).
183. Figure 2.7, however, shows that there were other factors influencing involvement.
184. Non resident parents were most likely to fall into the low involvement group (37 per cent). Similarly, parents of children with SEN (34 per cent), parents with three or more children (34 per cent) and non white parents (29 per cent) were all more likely than average to have low involvement.
185. Fathers were more likely than mothers to fall into the low involvement group (27 versus 21 per cent) as were lone parents compared with parents who had partners (26 versus 21 per cent). Those with the least involvement also tended to be the least involved in their child's school life, with the exception of parents of children with SEN who were highly involved in their child's schooling (see section 2.2.1).



186. In contrast, Parents who were not working / worked part time were more likely than those who worked full-time to have high involvement (21 per cent and 20 per cent respectively compared with 13 per cent). There was also a link between gender, level of parents' education and working status and mothers educated to degree level or above who were not working / in part-time employment were even more likely to have a high level of involvement (31 and 30 per cent respectively).
187. Although household income by itself was not influential in determining levels of involvement, parents with a high household income (£45,000+) who were not working were more likely (29 per cent) than the average non working parent to be highly involved and further investigation of this group indicates that the vast majority (76 per cent) were non-working mothers with high earning partners.

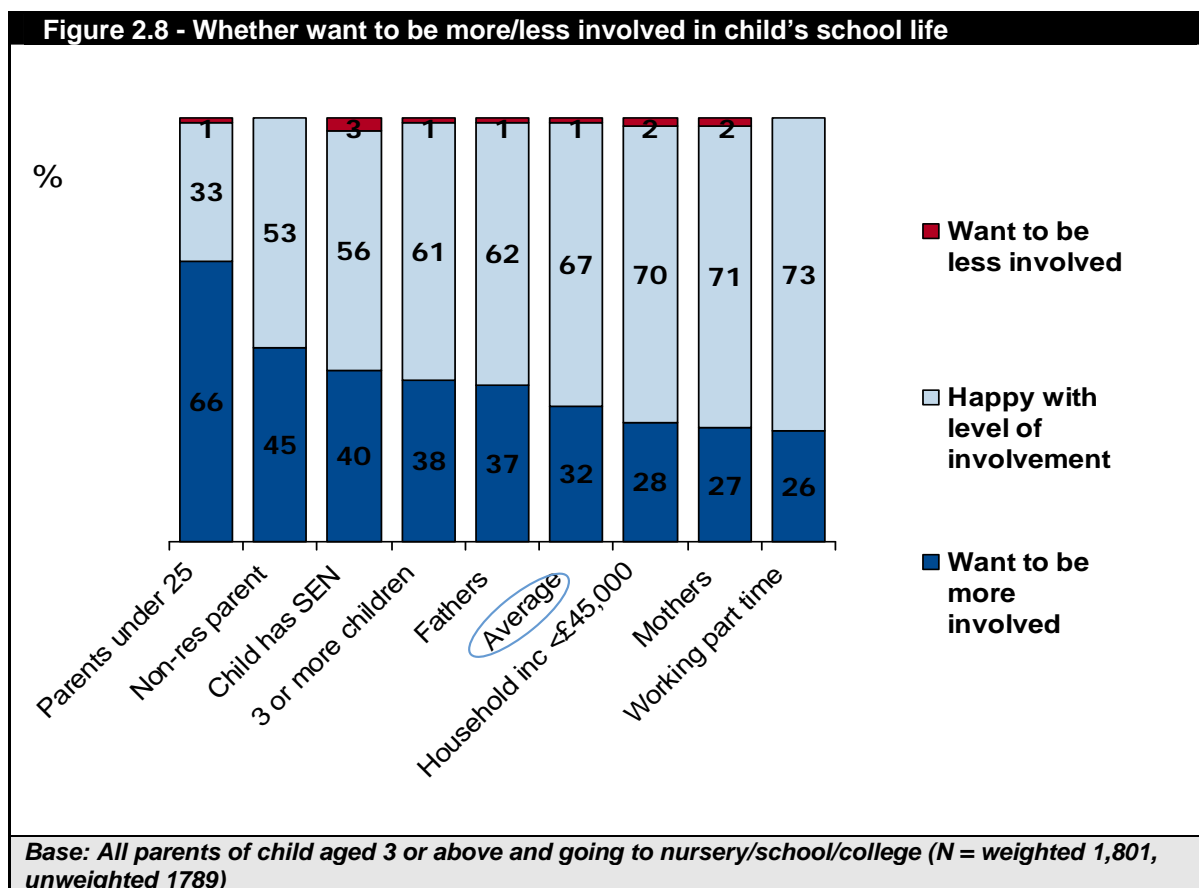


## 2.4 Are schools doing enough to engage parents?

### 2.4.1 Who wants to be more involved in their child's school life?

188. Figure 2.8 shows that those groups who were least likely to feel involved in their child's school life were most likely to seek more involvement in the future. Young parents (under 25) were most likely to seek more involvement (66 per cent). This is an interesting finding in light of the earlier finding in section 2.3.4, which indicates that a significant minority of young parents feel they spend too much time with their child.
189. Other groups who claimed to be less involved (parents of three or more children - 38 per cent, fathers - 37 per cent, and non-resident parents - 45 per cent) also expressed a desire for more involvement. While the majority of fathers (62 per cent) were happy with their level of involvement, significantly more fathers than mothers said they wanted to be more involved (37 versus 27 per cent).

190. As noted above, parents of children with a statement of SEN generally felt very involved in their children's education. As can be seen in figure 2.8, 40 per cent also sought more involvement in the future. This is consistent with findings from the PICE survey that show that parents of children with SEN both felt very involved currently and sought more involvement than other groups in the future.
191. These findings are interesting not least because they illustrate potential for schools to engage parents further. More specifically, these are parents who desire greater involvement in their child's school life. The policy challenge is how to engage these groups and increase parental involvement levels.



## 2.5 Segmentation - Key Findings

| Dimension   | The Segments               | %  | Summary   |
|---|----------------------------|----|---|
| <b>Not happy with the amount of time spend with child</b>               | <i>Average</i>             | 37 | <p>The stepping back segment was most likely to express dissatisfaction with the amount of time they get to spend with their children - 47 per cent were not happy with this. Over two fifths of the struggling through and comfortable and confident groups were also unhappy.</p> <p>This lack of time is borne out in their lower levels of parental involvement in schooling and general learning and development (see below).</p>  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 28 |   |
|   | Family focused             | 30 |   |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 42 |   |
|   | Stepping back              | 47 |   |
| <b>Feel involved in child's progress through school</b>                 | <i>Average</i>             | 87 | <p>Fewer than six in 10 (59 per cent) of the stepping back segment feel involved in their child's progress through school. A similarly low proportion (compared with other groups) of the struggling through segment felt involved.</p> <p>The segments with the highest levels of (perceived) involvement included those parents who were most likely to have younger children - i.e. perceived involvement decreases with the age of the child.</p>                                 |
|   | Stepping back              | 59 |   |
|   | Struggling through         | 66 |   |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 98 |   |
|   | Family focused             | 99 |   |
| <b>Would like to be more involved in child's school life</b>            | <i>Average</i>             | 32 | <p>A relatively large proportion of parents in the struggling through and committed but discontented segments sought more involvement.</p> <p>These parents could be targeted for further involvement. For instance, the struggling through and committed but discontented segments could be encouraged and supported further by schools. Whilst the segments may include some 'hard-to-reach' parents, these groups expressed a clear desire for more involvement in the future.</p> |
|   | Separate lives             |    |   |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 16 |   |
|   | Committed but discontented | 43 |   |
|   | Struggling through         | 46 |   |
| <b>Confident in ability to support child's learning and development</b> | <i>Average</i>             | 91 | <p>The struggling through segment was less confident than other groups in their ability to support their child's learning and development.</p>  |
|   | Struggling through         | 76 |   |
|   | Separate lives             | 84 |   |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 96 |   |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 96 |   |

|   |                            |    |  |
|---|----------------------------|----|--|
| <b>Know a lot about how can help child's education</b>                    | <i>Average</i>             | 76 | <p>In addition to the above, the struggling through segment had less (perceived) knowledge about how they could help with their child's education. Fewer than two thirds (65 per cent) of the stepping back segment also said they knew a lot about how to help.</p> <p>There is further potential to provide information and support to these parents.</p>  |
|   | Struggling through         | 53 |  |
|   | Stepping back              | 65 |  |
|   | Family focused             | 82 |  |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 85 |  |
| <b>Never feel confident helping child with homework</b>                   | <i>Average</i>             | 9  | <p>A significant proportion (19 per cent) of the struggling through segment said that they never felt confident helping their child with homework.</p>   |
|   | Comfortable and confident  | 1  |  |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 1  |  |
|   | Committed but discontented | 13 |  |
|   | Struggling through         | 19 |  |
| <b>Would like to be more involved in child's learning and development</b> | <i>Average</i>             | 54 | <p>Around two thirds of the struggling through and committed but discontented segments said they would like to be more involved in their child's learning and development. These groups were also most likely to seek more involvement in their child's schooling (see above).</p> <p>As mentioned previously, there is further scope for support services to reach out to these parents. The policy challenge is to provide appropriate mechanisms to engage parents and encourage involvement in the home and school environments.</p> |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 37 |  |
|   | Separate lives             | 40 |  |
|   | Struggling through         | 65 |  |
|   | Committed but discontented | 67 |  |

### 3 Access to Parental Information and Advice Services

#### Key Findings

- Around two-thirds (68 per cent) of all parents were 'service users', i.e. they had used at least one of the support services asked about within the last year.
- Only tiny proportions who had not used a particular service said they had required information but not received it, i.e. the overwhelming majority of non-service users reported that they simply do not require any advice.
- Seven in ten (71 per cent) parents had spoken to other parents / carers about parenting issues within the last month and four-fifths (79 per cent) to other family members; however, 12 per cent of parents had spoken to neither.
- Parents were most likely to obtain information, advice or support by means of written material (61 per cent) or in person (56 per cent); in comparison, smaller proportions used the internet (27 per cent) and telephone helplines (19 per cent) for this purpose.
- Only a very small proportion of service users (five per cent) reported that they had not received information in the way they had required it, signalling that the vast majority were content with the method by which they had obtained advice. Further, around nine in ten or more said they found it easy to obtain information about nearly all the different services they required.
- One quarter of fathers said they would be likely to attend a local group specifically for fathers to discuss parenting issues.

### 3.1 Introduction

192. This chapter provides insight into the different services which parents have used to access information, advice or support in the last year. The provision of information and support to parents was raised as a key issue for the Government in March 2007. The subsequent release of the Children's Plan in December 2007 included a commitment for improved information and support provision through to 2010/11. Parents can access support from a number of sources including:
- **The Parent Know How Programme:** launched in May 2008, aims to help all parents in England by giving them access to national information support and advice on a range of parenting issues through different channels. Parent Know How is a £60 million programme to provide free advice, support and information services to all mothers, fathers, carers and other adults with parental responsibility in England. The services are provided by third and private sector organisations, who parents trust and value. The services supported under the programme aim to deliver support to parents when and where they want it and in a form that suits them. Parents can ring a telephone helpline or go online for personalised advice; they can join a social network to get support from other parents in similar circumstances; watch online videos for handy tips, or read articles in newspapers and magazines. This enables parents to access information in ways they already connect with and can make their job of being a parent that little bit easier. Parent Know How has currently supported over 2.5 million parents. In addition, over 20 million adults had access to information on a variety of key parenting issues through the Parent Know How print strand.
  - **The Parent Know How Directory:** an online signposting service which offers parents, and those working with them, the ability to search for information about childcare and families services in both their local community and nationally. It went live on Directgov in September 2009 and will increasingly be available on a range of websites including local authority, third sector, parenting and library sites.
  - **Families Information Services (FISs):** Local authorities are required to provide parents with high quality, accurate accessible and timely information that helps them to keep their children safe, happy and healthy. This information is made available through FISs who provide comprehensive expert information advice and guidance to parents on a wide range of topics in their area. These include childcare provision, local health services, on parenting and relationship support and, on sporting, play and recreational activities.
  - **Sure Start Children's Centres/Extended Services:** Services are typically accessed through Sure Start Children's Centres for pre-school age children and for those with older children through primary and secondary schools offering extended services. These settings are important vehicles for local authorities in meeting their duty on information provision to parents and helping signpost parents to the information they need and access the support and services available to help them bring up their children. In children's centres services will include integrated childcare and early learning; child and family health services; parenting and family support, including outreach and home visiting; links with Job Centre Plus and support for childminders.

Extended services in and around schools include: a varied range of before and after school activities; childcare (for primary schools only) 8am-6pm, 48 weeks a year, or in response to demand, on the school site or through other local providers; parenting and family support, including parenting programmes, family learning sessions; swift and easy

access to specialist services such as speech and language therapy; and community use of facilities, such as sports and ICT facilities, and opportunities for adult and family learning.

193. The services asked about in the survey were developed in conjunction with the DCSF in the context of the above sources of support. Parents' views and opinions about the accessibility and usefulness of existing services prior to the launch of the Parent Know How Directory will serve as a useful baseline measure that can be tracked in future annual sweeps of the survey.
194. In the survey, parents were asked about a range of different services, as shown in the table overleaf.

| Services providing information or advice on... | Examples given in survey (e.g....)  |
|--|---|
| Schools  | admissions, attendance, moving schools  |
| Health   | children's illnesses, immunisation, healthy eating, mental health                     |
| Sport and play                                 | Activities / facilities for babies, children or young people                          |
| Childcare                                      | childminders, nurseries, out of school clubs  |
| Finances                                       | debts, loans, student finances  |
| Pregnancy, maternity or babies                 | antenatal, birth, paternity, support groups, advice on feeding, development or health |
| Safety and protection                          | child protection, home safety, internet safety  |
| Behaviour                                      | anti-social behaviour, bullying, discipline   |
| Law and rights                                 | education law, family law, parents' rights, maternity / paternity                     |
| Disability                                     | learning disabilities, SEN  |
| Teenagers                                      | sex education, smoking, drugs / alcohol, teenage pregnancy                            |
| Family support                                 | bereavement, adoption, fostering, emotional support, parenting support / classes      |
| Relationships                                  | counselling, teenagers, divorce, separation   |

195. It is important to note that parents were asked to consider their experiences of these services from a broad, overall perspective (bearing in mind that individuals' experiences may vary from service to service, even within the same service area). Further, to minimise respondent burden, if parents had accessed multiple services within the last year, subsequent questions were focussed on only two of these services (selected at random by CAPI), taking each service in turn.<sup>20</sup>
196. Specifically, this section covers the following key themes:
- How have parents used information to access services?
  - Is the information needed available to parents of all backgrounds?
  - Are parents able to find the information they need in the format they require?
  - Is the information needed available through the appropriate range of channels?
  - How difficult do parents find it to access the information they need?
  - Are there any barriers preventing parents from using services (e.g. parents not being aware of services)?

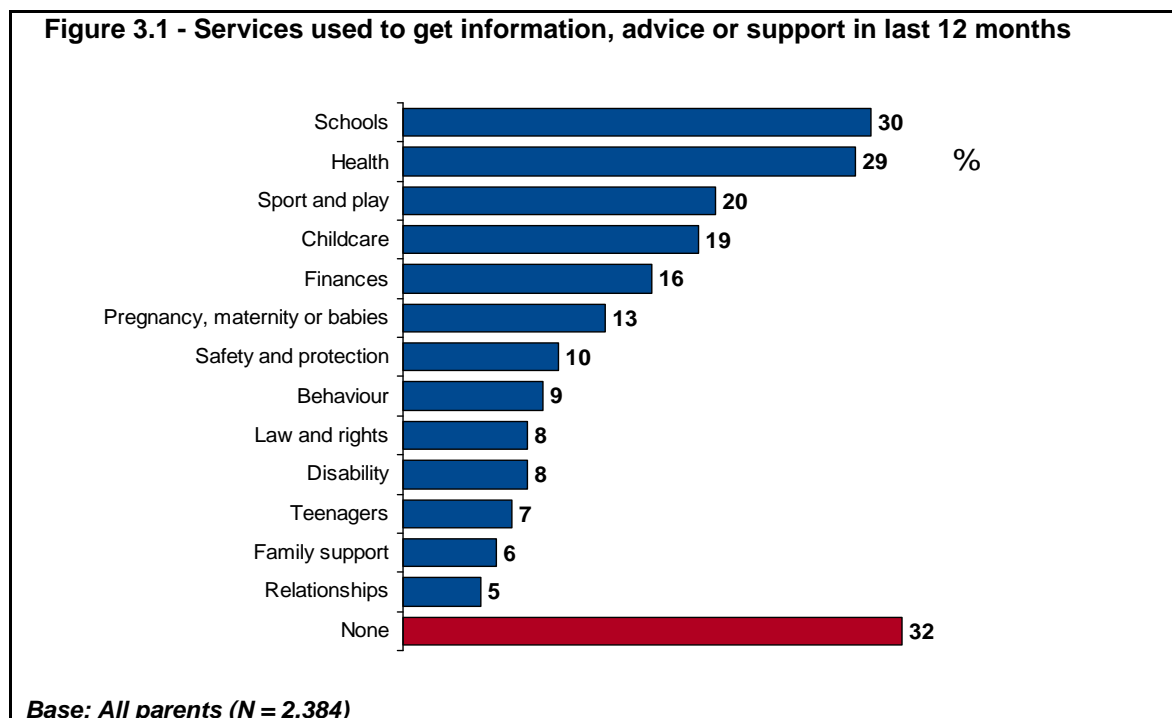
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<sup>20</sup> As a consequence, base sizes for questions on services are therefore slightly lower than the overall numbers who reported using them.

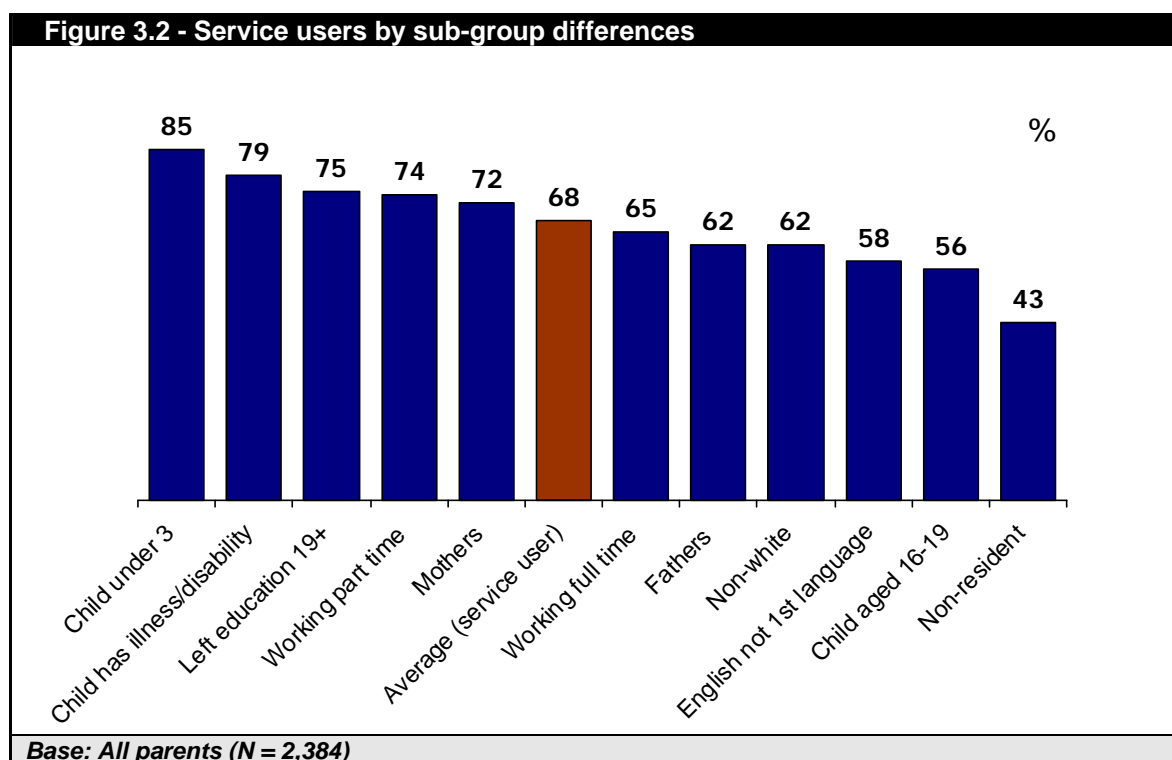


### 3.2 Use of formal services for parents

197. Figure 3.1 shows the proportion of parents who said that they had accessed each of the different services they were asked about in the last 12 months to obtain information, advice or support.



198. Overall, around two-thirds (68 per cent) of all parents were 'service users', i.e. they had used at least one of the services asked about within the last year. Around one quarter (23 per cent) were 'light' service users (had used only one service), around one third (35 per cent) were 'medium' users (two to four services) and one in ten (ten per cent) were 'heavy' users (five or more services); the remaining one third (32 per cent) said they had not used any of the listed services.
199. As figure 3.2 illustrates, parents of children aged under three were most likely to be service users - 85 per cent (decreasing to 56 per cent of parents of children aged 16-19). We know from the derivation of the confidence index that parents of younger children were most likely to have high levels of confidence (see section 1.11), suggesting that confidence may also be a factor in the use of support services. This is supported by the finding that parents in the low confidence group were the least likely to be service users (53 increasing to 85 per cent for the higher confidence group). This indicates that more help may need to be directed at certain groups of parents to increase their confidence to make use of the support services available to them.
200. Other parents who were more likely to be service users included parents of children with an illness or disability, those who left education aged 19+, those working part time and mothers.
201. In contrast, the least likely service users were non-resident parents (43 per cent). Other parents who were less likely to be service users included fathers, those working full time, parents of older children, parents where English was not their first language and non-white parents (irrespective of language).



202. Looking more specifically at these sub-group differences across the support services reveals that:

- As discussed in sections 1.2.1 and 2.3.1, parents who left the education system at an early age were *less* likely to feel confident when caring for their children or in their ability to support their child's learning and development. It is therefore interesting to note that these parents were also *less* likely to have accessed a number of services - childcare, pregnancy, maternity or babies, schools, health and sport and play - perhaps indicating that their lack of confidence in these respects is a barrier to seeking the support they require to boost their levels of confidence.
- Non-resident parents were *less* likely than average to have sought advice on a whole range of services: childcare; pregnancy, maternity or babies; schools; health; sport and play; behaviour, disability; safety and protection. Given that non-resident parents are by definition not the main carer and may therefore have less need for support services in general, these findings are perhaps not surprising; however, it should be borne in mind that non-resident parents are less confident overall than resident parents and so lack of confidence in accessing services may also be a factor in their decision not to do so.
- As would be expected, parents of younger children were *more* likely than those with older children to have sought information relating to childcare and pregnancy, maternity or babies. They were also *more* likely to have received advice on issues relating to schools, health, sport and play, safety and protection and law and rights. However, parents of children aged 18-19 were much *more* likely to have sought information on finances, perhaps in relation to student finance arrangements, as well as advice on teenagers.

- Parents of children with an illness or disability were *more* likely to have accessed health, behaviour and relationships services. As would be expected, they were also much *more* likely to have consulted disability services. However, such parents were *less* likely to have received information on childcare or pregnancy, maternity or babies.
- There were only relatively few differences apparent by gender, working status, language or ethnicity across the services. As might be expected, fathers were *less* likely than mothers to have received information about pregnancy, maternity or babies (as were parents working full time); services relating to schools, health and relationships were also *less* likely to have been accessed by fathers. Finance services were *less* likely to have been used by parents where English was not their first language; such parents were *more* likely to have sought information on childcare, however. There were no variations found by ethnicity that were not driven by language.

203. Further, some additional sub-group variations were apparent across the various support services:

- Parents of children with SEN were *less* likely to have accessed services pertaining to childcare, pregnancy, maternity or babies and schools. However, they were much *more* likely to have used behaviour and disability related services and slightly more likely to have sought advice about relationships.
- Lone parents were *less* likely to have used services relating to pregnancy, maternity or babies, finances and sport and play, but *more* likely to have sought information on relationships, law and rights and family support.
- As would be expected, parents with an illness or disability were *more* likely to have received information on disability, as well as behaviour and teenagers; they were *less* likely, however, to have used sports and play services.

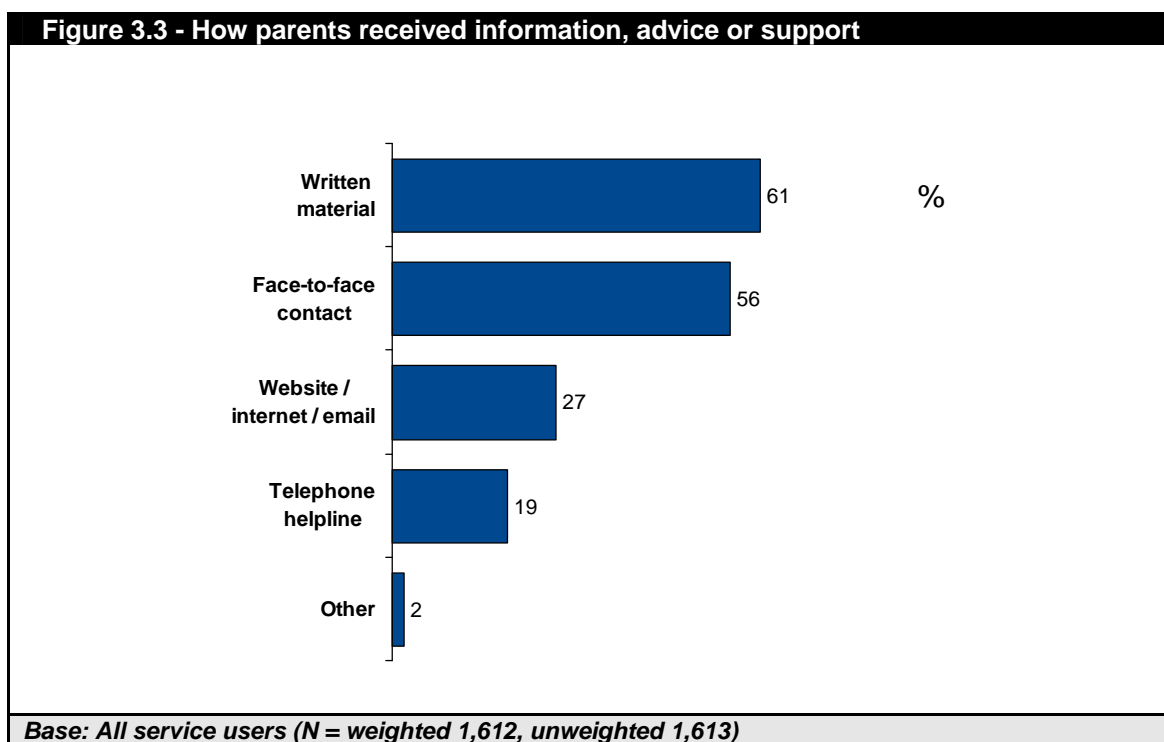
### **3.3 Use of informal services of support and advice**

204. As well as access to formal support services, parents were also asked about their use of more informal sources of information and advice, such as other parents, family and friends.
205. Nine per cent of parents said they spoke to other parents/carers about parenting issues every day, whilst 17 per cent said they spoke to other parents/carers several times a week and 21 per cent one or two times a week. Twenty-four per cent of parents reported speaking less frequently to other parents (one or two times a month), whilst the remaining 28 per cent said they did not do this at all.
206. The vast majority of parents (86 per cent) who spoke with other parents at least once a month said they did so informally amongst friends who are parents/carers. Around one fifth (22 per cent) said they conversed when dropping off / picking up their child at / from a childminder, nursery or school. Only seven per cent said they spoke to other parents at pre-arranged parents events such as parent coffee mornings.
207. Around one fifth (22 per cent) of parents said they spent a large amount of time and close to three fifths (57 per cent) a small amount of time talking to other family members (excluding their own children or stepchildren) about parenting issues. However, one fifth (21 per cent) said they did not do this at all.

208. Overall, 12 per cent of parents had not received any informal support. More specifically, parents who were less likely to spend time talking to other parents or family members were fathers, non-resident parents, those who left the education system at an early age, full time workers, those with older children and parents of children with SEN. With the exception of parents of children with SEN, these are the same groups of parents who were also found to be less likely than average to have used formal support services in the last year. This suggests that some parents are not seeking any information or advice from either formal or informal sources. Analysis using the confidence index suggests that a lack of confidence in seeking support may again be the underlying cause (those in the low confidence group were the least likely to speak to other parents / family members on an informal basis), and such parents may therefore need further assistance in this respect.

### 3.4 How parents received information, advice or support

209. Overall, as shown in figure 3.3, 61 per cent of parents who had used at least one support service in the last year said that they had received information, advice or support in the form of written material. A similar but slightly smaller proportion (56 per cent) had obtained information in person. Information made available on the internet / a website or via e-mail had been accessed by around 27 per cent of service users, and 19 per cent reported using a telephone helpline or advice line.<sup>21</sup>



210. Whilst written material was the most commonly cited method for obtaining information, non-resident parents, those who left the education system at a younger age, younger parents and parents of children with SEN were all less likely than average to have received information in this way.

<sup>21</sup> As parents were asked to consider a wide range of services, the data pertaining to the means by which they obtained information is also likely to be broad in scope. For example, the proportion citing use of telephone helplines will almost certainly include, say, parents who have rung solicitors or barristers (in relation to advice on law and rights), as well as more official telephone helplines such as Parentline Plus.

211. In contrast, younger parents (and those with younger children) and parents of children with SEN were more likely than average to have accessed information on a face-to-face basis. Other parents who were more likely to have received advice in person were those not working and parents of children with an illness or disability.
212. Younger parents and those who left the education system at a younger age were less likely than average to have used the internet as a means of receiving information, as were lone parents and those not working.
213. As shown above, the number of parents using telephone helplines is a relatively small proportion compared to non helpline services. This is also reinforced by Parent Know How usage i.e. Parent Know How serves far more people via its online and print channels than through its helplines. Interestingly, helplines were used nearly uniformly by the various sub-groups. This was supported by analysis using the confidence index, which reveals that there is no difference amongst the three confidence groups in usage of telephone helplines for seeking advice. It might therefore be worth exploring further the scope for using helplines as a channel to reach those groups of parents who have difficulty accessing the information they need.
214. Further, there was considerable variation in how parents said they had received information across the various services. Obtaining advice in the form of written material was highest amongst users of services relating to teenagers (68 per cent) and schools (63 per cent) and lowest amongst family support (28 per cent) and relationships (31 per cent) service users. In contrast, users of relationships services recorded amongst the highest levels of having accessed information in person (74 per cent), along with childcares service users (78 per cent). Users of services pertaining to teenagers and sport and play had the lowest levels for face-to-face contact (24 and 29 per cent respectively).
215. For internet / web based information, receiving advice was highest amongst users of law services (30 per cent); in comparison, only four per cent of relationships service users had obtained information in this way. Users of law services were also most likely to have obtained information by means of a telephone helpline (29 per cent); the least likely users to have received information via a helpline were those who had sought advice on teenagers (three per cent).
216. Parents who said they had received information, advice or support electronically were asked in which ways they had used the internet or a website. More than nine in ten (92 per cent) said they simply browsed websites / the internet. Around one sixth (18 per cent) said they had received electronic information via e-mail, but only two per cent had made use of on-line chat rooms.

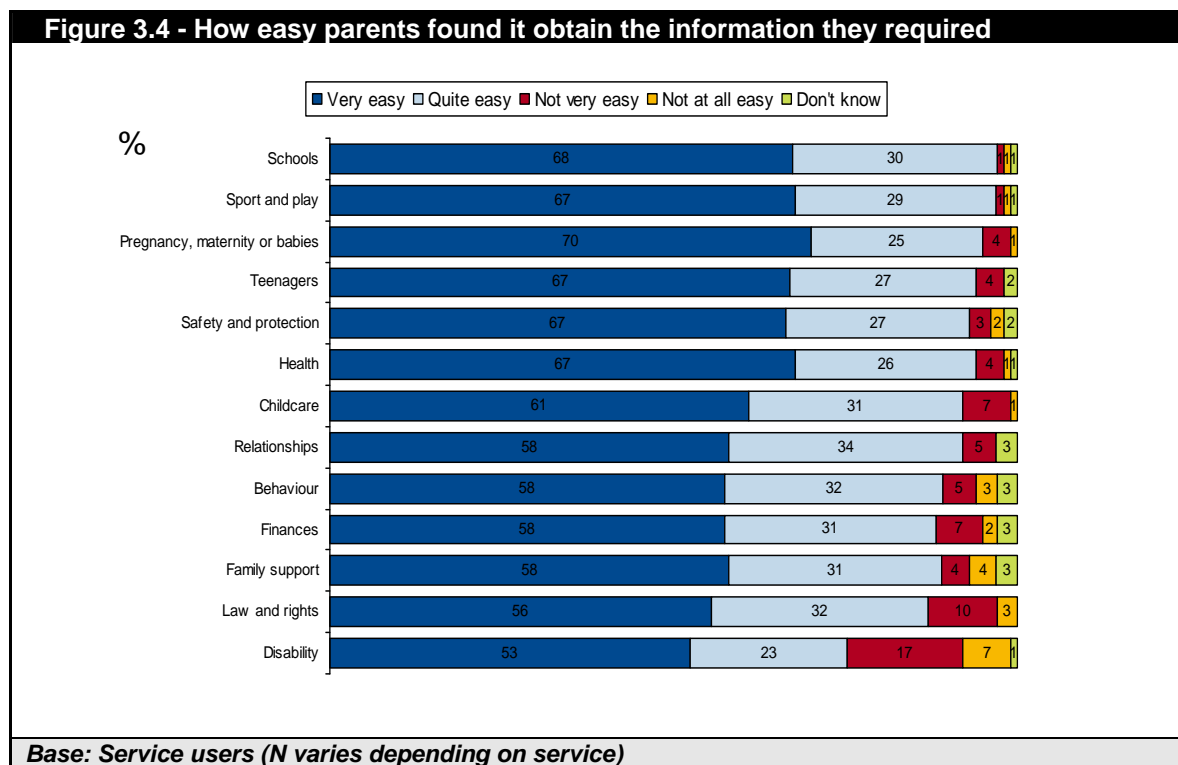
### **3.5 How parents would liked to have received information, advice or support**

217. Overall, only a very small proportion of service users (five per cent) reported that they had not received information in the way they had required it, signalling that the vast majority were content with the method by which they had obtained advice. There was very little variation in response across the different support services.
218. The few service users who said they had not received information in the way they would have liked were asked how they would have preferred to obtain advice. Around one quarter (27 per cent) selected written material, a little over one half (54 per cent) face-to-face contact, one fifth (20 per cent) the internet / a website and one in eleven (nine per cent) a telephone helpline.

219. Generally, it is clearly encouraging that nearly all parents who had used support services in the last year were satisfied with the format in which they had received information, suggesting that parents are not being frustrated when they try to access advice by any particular method.

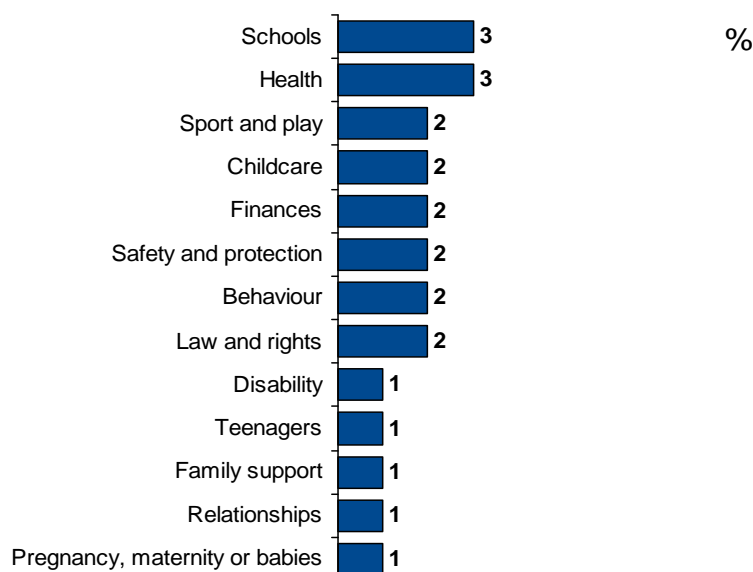
### 3.6 Barriers to accessing information, advice or support

220. Reflecting the positive findings observed in relation to service users who overwhelmingly reported that they were able to receive advice in the format they required, around nine in ten or more said they found it easy to obtain information about nearly all the different services they required (see figure 3.4). In particular, services related to schools recorded the highest levels for ease of acquiring information – 98 per cent, which included around two-thirds (68 per cent) who said it was very easy to obtain advice about schools.
221. Only disability services recorded notably lower levels of satisfaction for ease of obtaining information - around one quarter (24 per cent) said it was not easy to access advice in this area. Indicative findings suggest that the main reasons for this related to a lack of information being available and poor quality advice (rather than reasons of cost or transportation).



222. The base sizes for individual services were generally insufficient to allow for detailed analysis by different sub-groups of parents.
223. In addition to asking service users about any potential barriers they faced in accessing services, those parents who had not used particular services were asked whether they had actually needed advice in the last year, even though they had not received it. Figure 3.5 displays the results.

**Figure 3.5 - Whether parents needed advice but did not receive it**



*Base: Parents who had not used particular services (N varies depending on service)*

224. Encouragingly, as the figure illustrates, only tiny proportions of parents who had not used a particular service said they had required information but not received it, meaning the overwhelming majority of parents who said they had not used a specific support service had not done so simply because they had not required advice in this area. These figures support the findings already reported that parents are generally able to obtain the information and advice they require with relative ease and by the method of their choice.

### 3.7 Support for fathers

225. One quarter of fathers (25 per cent) said they would be likely to attend a local group set up in their local area specifically for fathers to discuss parenting issues and socialise with other fathers. Enthusiasm was highest amongst non-white fathers (60 per cent) and fathers where English was not their first language (57 per cent). Other fathers who said they would be more likely than average to attend included those who were younger or had younger children, those who left the education system at an early age and fathers working either part time or not at all.
226. Fathers who indicated they would be unlikely to attend such a group were asked for their reasons. Close to two-fifths (37 per cent) said that they did not need to go to such a group and three in ten (30 per cent) said it would not interest them. A similar proportion (30 per cent) ruled out attendance because of work demands (e.g. long hours) and one sixth (16 per cent) indicated that they already know enough fathers they can socialise / discuss parenting groups with. Other reasons given were mentioned only in small proportions (of fewer than ten per cent).
227. Analysis using the confidence index confirms that confidence is a key determinant in whether fathers would be likely to attend a fathers' group: those in the higher confidence group were twice as likely as those in the low confidence group to say they might attend (38 and 19 per cent respectively).

### 3.8 Segmentation - key findings

| Dimension   | The Segments                          | %  | Summary  |
|---|---------------------------------------|----|--|
| Service user  | <i>Average</i>                        | 68 | <p>The comfortable and confident segment was the <i>most</i> likely to be service users, supporting the findings reported in section 3.2 that confidence is key to accessing support services.</p> <p>The <i>least</i> likely segments to be service users were content and self fulfilled and separate lives, probably because they are largely comprised of parents who feel they have less need for support services.</p>   |
|   | Content and self fulfilled            | 58 |  |
|   | Separate lives                        | 58 |  |
|   | Committed but discontented            | 72 |  |
|   | Comfortable and confident             | 76 |  |
| Talks to other parents / carers about parenting issues  | <i>Average</i>                        | 71 | <p>Reflecting the findings in section 2.3, the segment <i>least</i> likely to talk to other parents / carers - struggling through - is the one which is probably most in need of support.</p>  |
|   | Struggling through                    | 60 |  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled            | 64 |  |
|   | Family focused                        | 77 |  |
|   | Comfortable and confident             | 80 |  |
| Talks to other family members about parenting issues  | <i>Average</i>                        | 79 | <p>As above, the segment most in need - struggling through - is the one which is <i>least</i> likely to make use of other family members as an informal support network.</p> <p>A lack of confidence in seeking support could again likely be part of the explanation and such parents may therefore need further assistance in this respect.</p>  |
|   | Struggling through                    | 65 |  |
|   | Separate lives                        | 70 |  |
|   | Family focused                        | 83 |  |
|   | Relaxed and caring                    | 84 |  |
| How received information, advice or support<br>- <i>written material</i><br><br>- <i>face-to-face contact</i> | <i>Average (written material)</i>     | 61 | <p>The struggling through and supportive but frustrated segments were <i>less</i> likely than the comfortable and confident and relaxed and caring segments to have received information in the form of written material, in person or via the internet. However, the position was reversed in respect of seeking advice via a telephone helpline: the supportive but frustrated and struggling through segments were <i>more</i> likely to have obtained information in this way. This reinforces the findings seen in section 3.4 which showed that telephone helplines were generally accessible to all, lending support for the enhanced provision of support services helplines (particularly for less confident parents who are struggling through).</p> |
|   | Struggling through                    | 51 |  |
|   | Supportive but frustrated             | 57 |  |
|   | Stepping back                         | 61 |  |
|   | Separate lives                        | 66 |  |
|   |                                       |    |  |
|   | <i>Average (face-to-face contact)</i> | 56 |  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled            | 44 |  |
|   | Stepping back                         | 49 |  |
|   | Relaxed and caring                    | 61 |  |
|   | Comfortable and confident             | 62 |  |
|   |                                       |    |  |
|   |                                       |    |  |



|  |                               |    |  |
|--|-------------------------------|----|--|
| <b>- web / internet / e-mail</b>                         |                               |    |  |
|  | Average (web/internet/e-mail) | 27 |  |
|  | Committed but discontented    | 14 |  |
|  | Supportive but frustrated     | 23 |  |
|  | Comfortable and confident     | 31 |  |
|  | Content and self fulfilled    | 34 |  |
|  |                               |    |  |
| <b>- telephone helpline</b>                              | Average (telephone helpline)  | 19 |  |
|  | Family focused                | 11 |  |
|  | Relaxed and caring            | 15 |  |
|  | Struggling through            | 24 |  |
|  | Content and self fulfilled    | 25 |  |
|  |                               |    |  |
| <b>Likely to attend a group specifically for fathers</b> | Average                       | 25 | <p>There was relatively little variation amongst the key segments in terms of likelihood to attend a fathers' group. As might be expected, the segment <i>most</i> likely to indicate they would attend was family focused, whilst potential attendance was <i>least</i> likely for the separate lives segment.</p> <p>However, we know from analysis using the confidence index that confidence is a factor in how likely fathers would be to attend a fathers' group, with the low confidence group being the <i>least</i> likely.</p> |
|  | Separate lives                | 9  |  |
|  | Content and self-fulfilled    | 13 |  |
|  | Struggling through            | 29 |  |
|  | Family focused                | 41 |  |

## 4 Confidence in parental support services

### Key Findings

- The vast majority of parents felt that the support services they had accessed were useful. In particular, 97 per cent of parents who had used services offering information or advice on teenagers felt they had been of use.
- There was considerable variation across the different services in relation to whether parents felt their parenting skills / confidence had been improved as a result of the service accessed.
- There was also some variance across the different services in relation to those that parents said had given them the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Around three-quarters (77 per cent) of parents said they were confident they would know where to go if they needed to obtain information or advice about general or specific parenting issues.
- The vast majority (94 per cent) of parents had been in contact with staff at their child's nursery, school or college within the last year. Two-fifths (39 per cent) had communicated within the last week, whilst only small proportions said there had been no contact in the last year or not at all (three per cent for both).
- Parents reported having used a number of different methods for obtaining information about their child's progress within the last year in varying proportions.
- Despite three-quarters of parents reporting that they had attended a parents' evening in the last year, one quarter (23 per cent) nonetheless felt that parents' evenings should be used more, whilst one sixth (18 per cent) felt that greater use could be made of notes or letters.

### 4.1 Introduction

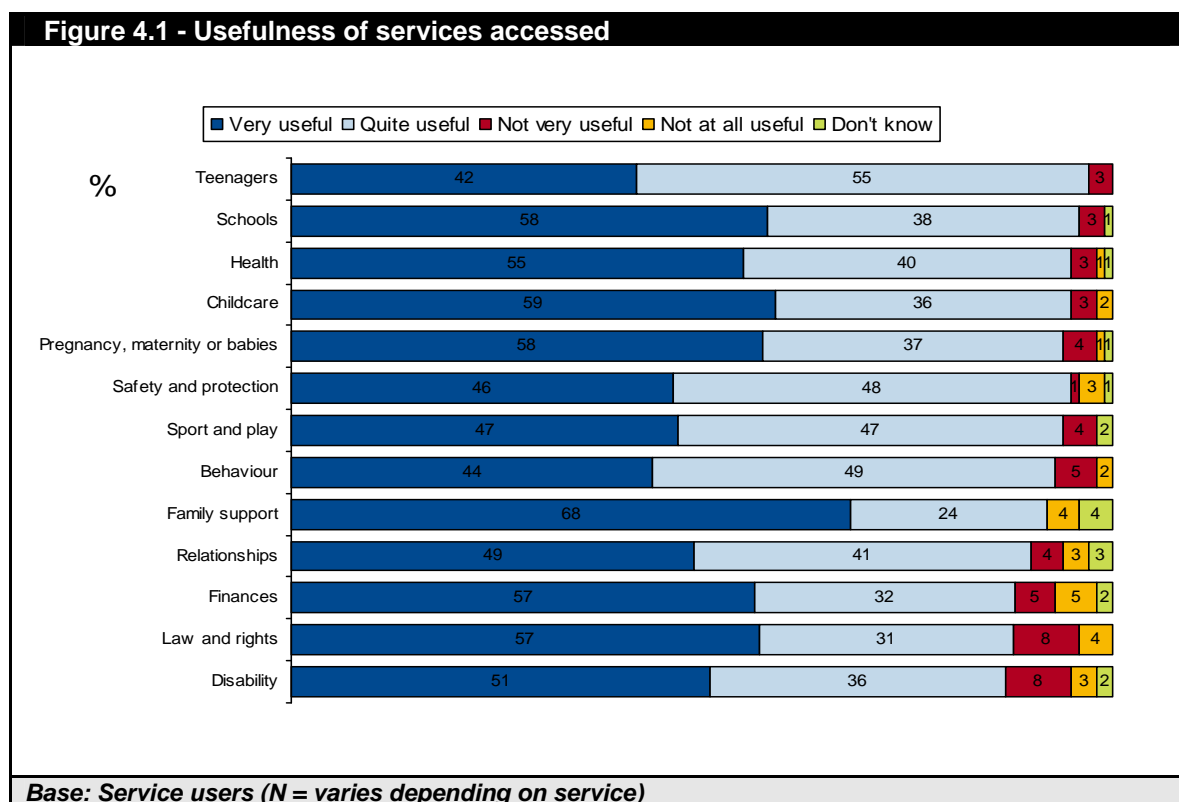
228. This section provides further information on support services and examines parental confidence in these services. Previous sections have already highlighted the importance of confidence in relation to parents' propensity to use formal and informal support services, as well as more general involvement in their child's learning and development. It has been shown that parents who lack confidence are generally less likely to be engaged in their child's development or make use of the support services that may be available to them.
229. The importance of confidence is now examined from a further perspective: the extent to which the support services accessed successfully manage to instil a sense of confidence in parents in respect of their parenting skills and confidence. In addition, the opportunity for parents to provide feedback on the services they have used and the level of confidence they have that they would know how to obtain parenting information and advice are also brought into focus, as is parental confidence in engaging with their child's nursery, school or college.

230. As noted in section 3.1, it is again important to bear in mind that parents were asked to consider their experiences of parental services from a broad, overall perspective and the survey responses will reflect therefore reflect this context.
231. Specifically, this section covers the following key themes:
- Do parents find that the support services they have used have met their needs?
  - Can parents with complex needs obtain the support they require?
  - Have services helped parents to support their children?
  - Have parents been involved in the design and development of services?
  - How confident are parents that the information they need is available?
  - Are schools doing enough to engage parents?

## 4.2 Whether support services meet parents' needs

### 4.2.1 Usefulness of support services

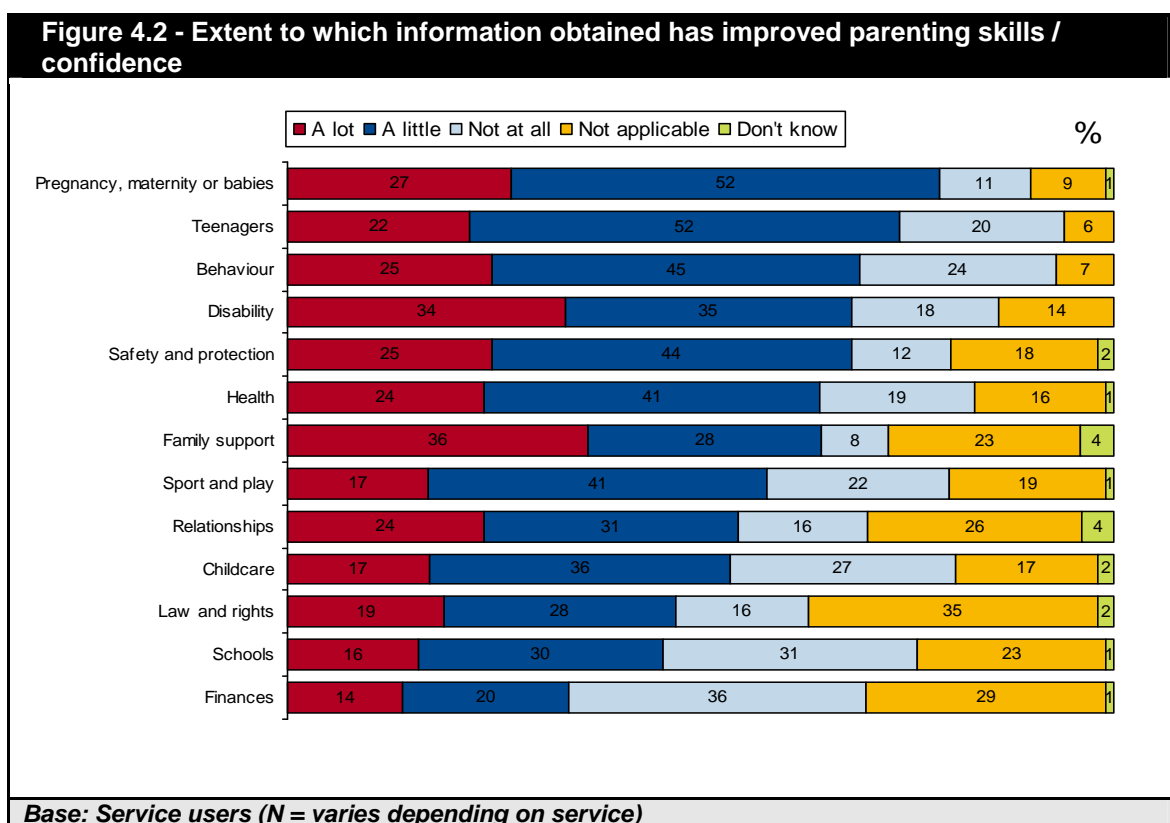
232. Encouragingly, as figure 4.1 shows, the vast majority of parents felt that the support services they had accessed were useful. As with the findings for ease of obtaining information reported in section 3.6, very high proportions of usefulness were found across the different support services that parents were asked about. For example, 97 per cent of parents who had used services offering information or advice on teenagers felt they had been of use.
233. Interestingly, following on from the finding that disability services received the lowest rating for ease of obtaining information, services pertaining to disability were also the least highly rated in terms of usefulness - 87 per cent, although this figure still represents a high level of satisfaction in relative terms.



234. The base sizes for individual services were generally insufficient to allow for detailed analysis by different sub-groups of parents.

#### 4.2.2 Extent to which support services have improved parental skills / confidence

235. Parents who had used at least one support service were asked to what extent they felt the information they had obtained had improved their parenting skills / confidence. As figure 4.2 illustrates, there was considerable variation across the different services. Four-fifths (79 per cent) of parents who had sought advice on pregnancy, maternity or babies felt that the information they had received had improved their parenting skills to some extent compared with one third (34 per cent) of parents who had accessed information on finances.
236. However, although certain services recorded lower proportions of parents indicating that their parenting skills had been enhanced, this should not necessarily be seen as a negative indicator; indeed, it should be borne in mind that, as reported in section 4.2.1, all services were rated very highly by parents in terms of usefulness. Therefore it may be the case that the lower proportions found for some services simply indicates that parents did not feel that the information provided by these services actually related directly to their parenting skills / confidence, even though it may have been very useful in other respects.



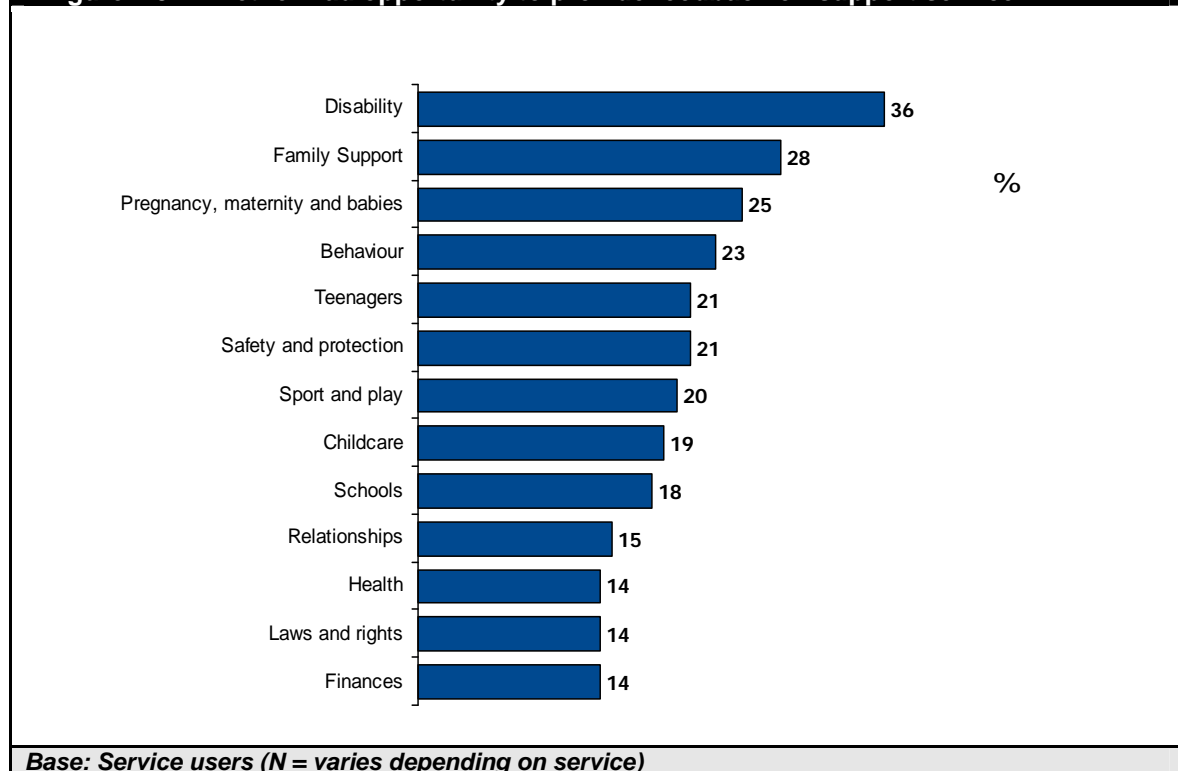
237. The base sizes for individual services were generally insufficient to allow for detailed analysis by different sub-groups of parents.

#### 4.3 Parental feedback on support services

238. The proportions of parents who indicated that they had been given the opportunity to provide feedback on the support services they had accessed are shown in figure 4.3. There was some variance across the different services. More than one third (36 per cent) of parents who had accessed disability support services said that the option to provide

feedback had been available decreasing to fourteen per cent who said there was an opportunity to do so for services related to health, finances and laws and rights.

**Figure 4.3 - Whether had opportunity to provide feedback on support service**



239. Whilst existing services are offering some opportunities for parents to comment, these findings seem to indicate that more could be done to allow parents the possibility to shape services by offering them the option to provide feedback on their customer experiences.

#### **4.4 Whether parents are confident they would know where to access information**

240. All parents were asked how confident they would be that they would know where to go if they needed to obtain information or advice about general or specific parenting issues. Around three-quarters (77 per cent) said they were confident, which included one third (34 per cent) who felt very confident.
241. Non-resident parents were the least likely to report that that would be confident in knowing how to access information (63 per cent). Other parents who indicated that they would be less confident than average included: parents of children aged 18-19 (64 per cent), parents where English was not their first language (65 per cent) and non-white parents (66 per cent).
242. These findings reinforce those reported in section 3.2, as these are much the same groups of parents who were found to be less likely than average to be service users, perhaps explaining further why certain parents might not make use of support services: they are unsure in the first instance how to access the services they might require and lack the confidence to find this out.

## **4.5 Parental engagement with child's educational establishment**

243. As well as exploring how confident parents feel in relation to support services, the survey also examined parental confidence in the context of engagement with their child's nursery, school or college.

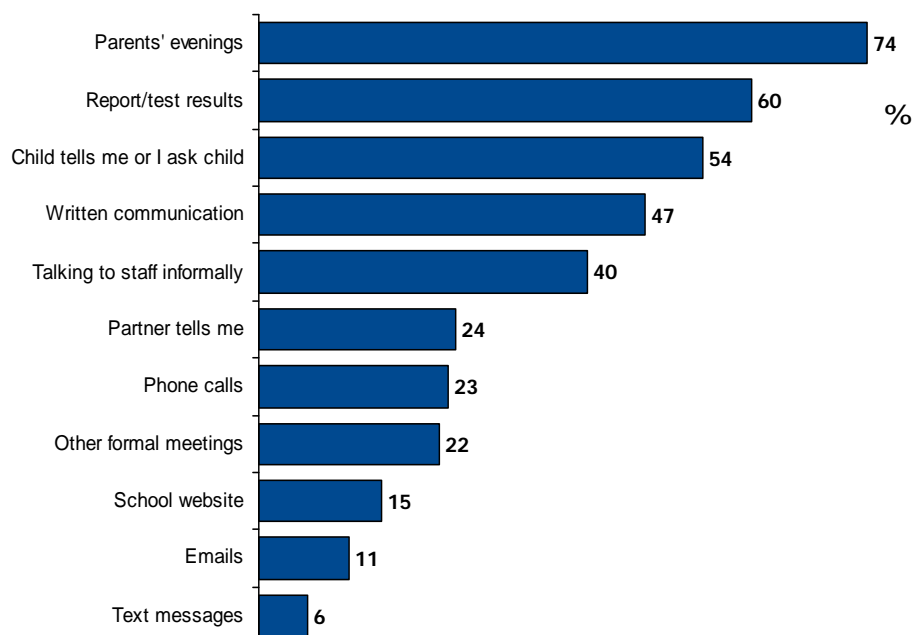
### **4.5.1 Contact with child's educational establishment**

244. Parents of children attending a nursery, school or college were asked to detail when they last had contact with the staff, excluding any general correspondence that the school may have sent out to parents.
245. Overall, the vast majority (94 per cent) of parents had been in contact within the last year. Two-fifths (39 per cent) of parents had communicated with their child's educational establishment within the last week, whilst only small proportions said there had been no contact for more than a year or never (three per cent for both).
246. Parents who were less likely to have been in contact recently (within the last week) included: fathers (27 versus 48 per cent mothers); non-resident parents (11 versus 40 per cent resident parents); those working full time (32 versus 46 per cent part time and 49 per cent not working); parents of older children.
247. Findings reported in sections 3.2 and 3.3 showed that non-resident parents, fathers and parents of older children were also less likely to be service users or receive informal support, suggesting that these groups of parents are less likely to engage with their child's development on a number of different levels.
248. Further, an analysis of parental contact with the child's educational establishment using the confidence index suggests that confidence is a factor in how recently parents had been in contact with their child's nursery, school or college. Parents in the low confidence group - which are more likely to include fathers, non-resident parents and parents of older children - were less likely to have been in contact within the last week (30 increasing to 55 per cent for the higher confidence group) and also less likely to have been in contact within the last month (60 increasing to 82 per cent for the higher confidence group).

### **4.5.2 How parents have obtained information about child's educational development**

249. Parents reported having used a number of different methods for obtaining information about their child's progress within the last year in varying proportions. As shown in figure 4.4, three-quarters (74 per cent) said they had received information about how their child was getting on at nursery, school or college from parents' evenings through to only six per cent who had done so via text messages.

**Figure 4.4 - Methods of obtaining information about how child is getting on at nursery, school or college**



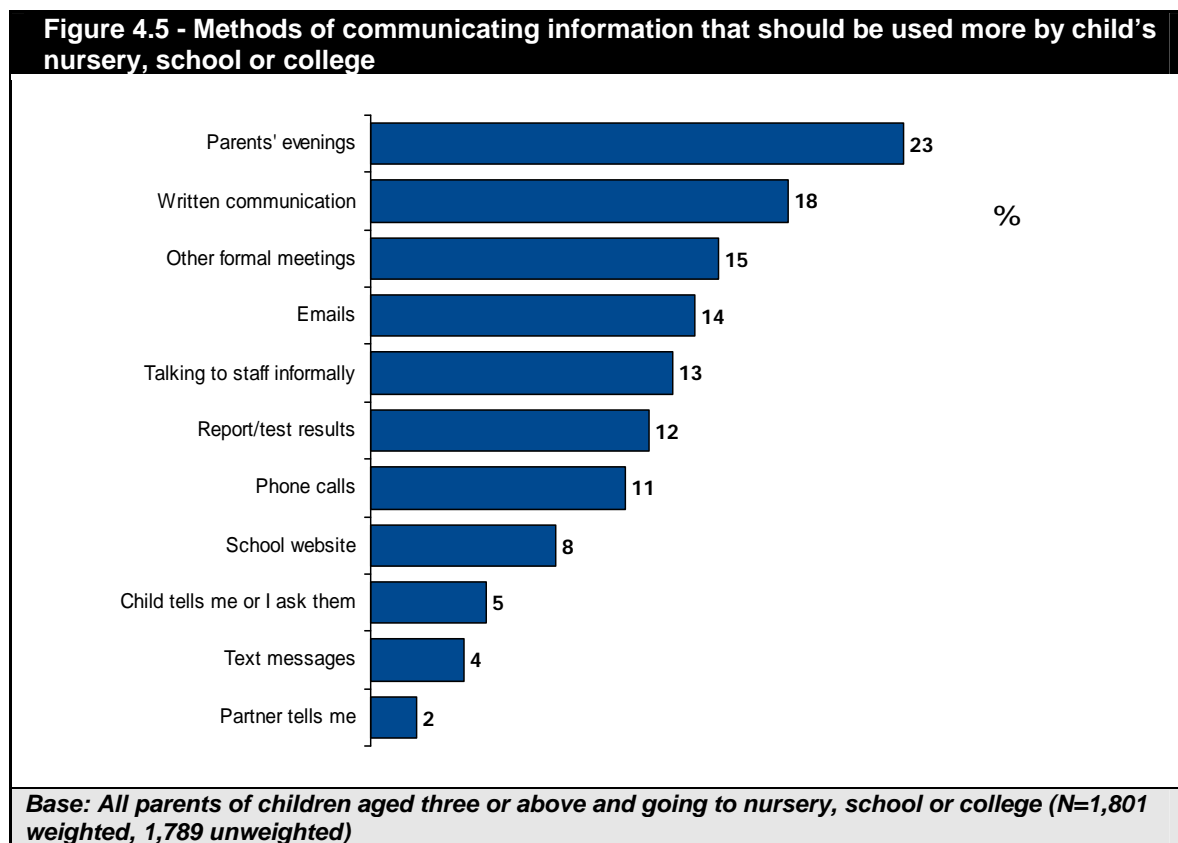
*Base: All parents of children aged three or above and going to nursery, school or college (N=1,801 weighted, 1,789 unweighted)*

250. Reflecting the findings reported above in relation to parental contact with their child's educational establishment, parents who were generally less likely to have received information about their child's progress were fathers and non-resident parents, as well as those where English was not their first language and non-white parents (irrespective of language).
251. In contrast, parents of children with SEN and those whose child had an illness or disability were more likely to have engaged in dialogue with their child's educational establishment in a number of ways, in particular by means of written communication, formal meetings and telephone calls.

#### **4.5.3 Methods of communicating information parents feel should be used more**

252. Having established the methods by which parents currently obtain information about their child's progress, they were subsequently asked if there were methods of communicating information that they felt their child's educational establishment should use more.
253. Despite three-quarters of parents reporting that they had attended a parents' evening in the last year, figure 4.5 shows that one quarter (23 per cent) nonetheless felt that parents' evenings should be used more, whilst one sixth (18 per cent) felt that greater use could be made of notes or letters.
254. The proportion of parents who felt that parents' evenings should be used more as a method of communicating how their child is getting on was notably higher than that found in the 2007 PICE survey (eight per cent). However, other methods that parents felt should be used more were generally given in broadly similar proportions as were found in the

most recent PICE survey, with the exception of other formal meetings (15 versus 8 per cent PICE 2007).<sup>22</sup>



255. The sub-group findings reveal that:

- Non-resident parents were *more* likely than average to state that more use should be made of text messages and phone calls from the school (10 and 20 per cent respectively).
- Parents of children who were disabled or ill were *less* likely than average to say parents' evenings should be used more (16 per cent).
- Parents where English was not their first language were *more* likely than average to request greater use of parents' evenings (37 per cent) and informal discussions with staff (28 per cent). However, they were *less* likely to want more e-mail correspondence (five per cent).
- In respect of working status, parents who worked full time were less likely to want to speak to staff informally (11 per cent), whilst those who worked part time were more likely to want to communicate directly with their child (eight per cent). Parents who were not working were less likely to state that more use should be made of e-mails (nine per cent).

<sup>22</sup> These comparative findings should be treated with caution due to the differing methodologies employed for the Parental Opinion Survey and PICE.



## 4.6 Segmentation - key findings

| Dimension   | The Segments                       | %  | Summary  |
|---|------------------------------------|----|--|
| <b>Confident would know where to go for information / advice</b>  | <i>Average</i>                     | 77 | <p>The struggling through segment was less confident than other groups that they would know where to go for information / advice. It has been shown in previous chapters that the struggling through segment also recorded lower confidence levels in their ability to support their child's learning and development and in caring for their child.</p> <p>The majority of parents in the comfortable and confident segment were confident they would know where to go for information / advice. As found in the section 3.2, they were also the segment most likely to be service users.</p> |
|   | Struggling through                 | 62 |  |
|   | Committed but discontented         | 69 |  |
|   | Relaxed and caring                 | 81 |  |
|   | Comfortable and confident          | 87 |  |
| <b>When last had contact with child's educational setting -within last month</b><br><br><b>- within last week</b> | <i>Average (within last month)</i> | 71 | <p>The struggling through segment was least likely to have had contact with their child's educational establishment within the last month, and also less likely than average to have been in contact within the last week (35 per cent).</p>   |
|   | Struggling through                 | 56 |  |
|   | Stepping back                      | 60 |  |
|   | Family focused                     | 78 |  |
|   | Relaxed and caring                 | 80 |  |
|   |                                    |    | <p>As the struggling through segment were also less likely to have used informal support, more help needs to be targeted at this group to increase their confidence in seeking help when they require it.</p>  |
|   | <i>Average (within last week)</i>  | 39 |  |
|   | Content and self-fulfilled         | 24 |  |
|   | Stepping back                      | 33 |  |
|   | Family focused                     | 52 |  |
|   | Relaxed and caring                 | 54 |  |

## Conclusions and Implications for Policy

256. Throughout this report we have highlighted various implications for policy. In this concluding section we provide a summary of these as well as highlighting potential areas for further research.

### Building confidence and self-esteem

257. The survey data provide some consistent messages around a lack of confidence for some parents. Specific groups such as parents who do not have English as their first language, parents with older children and those with lower education levels all appear to lack confidence compared to other groups. Although overall levels of confidence reported in the survey were very high, the relative differences in confidence between parents is the main conclusion to draw from these data.
258. The policy challenge is how to engage these parents and help build their self esteem. For instance, the Government's commitment to extended services in and around schools is one area where parents may be able to access parental support. The challenge for schools will involve appropriate targeting and promotion of services to those parents in greatest need.
259. Some parents may also need **more support and encouragement to support their child's learning at home**. For example:
- a significant minority of parents claimed that they never felt confident helping their children with homework. Greater links may be needed between home and school for these parents.

For many parents, **improved self esteem and confidence is a necessary precursor to greater parental involvement** in their children's education. More specifically, the survey has shown that:

- increased confidence has impacts in other areas such as increased involvement levels, greater enjoyment of parenting and less reported difficulties with behaviour management.

### Meeting the needs of parents of children with SEN

260. Parents of children with SEN face particular **challenges especially around behaviour issues**. As a result, they are more likely to:
- experience relationship tension, mental health issues and generally struggle to control their child's behaviour.

Parents of children with SEN have a clear desire for greater involvement in their child's education and this is on top of already high levels of involvement. These findings are consistent with those from the PICE research. The diversity of SEN and the resulting needs of parents mean that policies will need to respond to these varying demands. In particular, there is scope for support services to offer greater information and guidance to parents of children with SEN. The findings show that parents of children with SEN are the most likely to receive information and advice from support services on behaviour related issues (e.g. anti-social behaviour, bullying and discipline). There are further challenges for schools in the way that they can meet this clear parental desire for further involvement in their child's schooling.

261. It is important to note that the research does not examine type of SEN in more detail. The survey findings show that parents of children with SEN are more likely than average to face a struggle with behaviour issues. However, SEN cover a broad spectrum of needs and it is possible that the behaviour challenges of some parents will be very different to others. This is likely to be related to the precise needs and age of the child. Further research would be needed to unpack this further.

### **How do schools and support services involve non-resident parents?**

262. The survey has pointed to a number of challenges for support services in terms of navigating around complex family processes and meeting the needs of parents who do not reside with their children. Many non-resident parents:

- **lack involvement** but desire more involvement with their children;
- **lack confidence** in supporting their child's learning / development; and
- **lack knowledge** about where to go for information and advice.

Like parents of SEN (see above) this is likely to be a diverse group of parents. It will also include parents who currently have a lot of contact with their child as well as those who have not seen their child for a long time<sup>23</sup>. Many of these parents may already have some involvement with the school or other support services, whilst others may be marginalised from this process.

### **Engaging Fathers**

263. The Think Fathers Campaign recognises the need to increase the involvement of fathers and promote access to support services. The survey showed that:

- Fathers are less engaged than mothers in their children's education; and
- Fathers are less likely to use support services.

Furthermore, these differences are not explained by working status, with involvement levels much higher amongst working mothers than working fathers.

While the majority of fathers were happy with their level of involvement, **significantly more fathers than mothers said they wanted to be more involved**. The challenge for schools centres on the need to understand and overcome the barriers that some fathers face as well as providing appropriate ways for fathers to engage in their child's learning. Further research could focus on *why* fathers are less engaged than mothers and what strategies might help overcome any barriers that fathers do encounter. The challenge is how to facilitate greater involvement amongst fathers if they desire it.

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<sup>23</sup> To be eligible for interview absent parents must have seen their child in the last 12 months or attempted to do so in the last 12 months.

### What can support services do to alleviate frustration levels?

264. The survey found that frustration is affected by both demographic and attitudinal factors. In summary, **groups that may require further support to alleviate frustration** include:

- parents in larger families;
- those with lower levels of educational attainment;
- and working parents.

It is worth noting that whilst levels of parental involvement are affected by gender of the parent and age of the child, frustration levels are not significantly affected by either of these factors.

The attitudes of parents that also drive frustration include:

- perceived struggles with behaviour management;
- perceived time that parents have for themselves, their partner and their children; and finally
- frustration is heightened amongst parents with lower levels of confidence.

There are a number of policy challenges here. These parents may need more support and encouragement as well as work to build their parental self-esteem and confidence. There are possible opportunities for schools to reach out to these parents, although they may require help identifying and supporting them. Additional support might be needed in behaviour management strategies. The key barriers that schools and support services might face in engaging this group are likely to centre on time constraints, a particular issue amongst working parents. The latter group's frustrations are likely to be increased due to work-life balance pressures.

265. It is also important to recognise that the frustrations of parents are likely to centre on individual and personal concerns. There are obvious limitations to what support services can do to eradicate all of these concerns and further research might be needed to unpack parental frustration further. The survey data show that **confident parents are more likely to enjoy parenting and find it less frustrating**. This is likely to be a circular argument to a large extent as frustration affects confidence and a lack of confidence may fuel frustration. However, **strategies that help improve confidence may in part help with parental frustration**.

### Increasing accessibility of support services

266. The vast majority of parents who had used parental support services signalled that they had found it easy to obtain the information they needed in the format they required. Thus, for the majority, there seem to be few barriers to accessing support services. Nonetheless, it is also the case that parents who are 'struggling through' are less likely to use support services, even though they are generally more in need of information and advice. A lack of confidence may to some extent explain their reluctance to seek assistance coupled with a lack of knowledge on where to go to access support. A potential policy challenge therefore centres on how to **instil these parents with the necessary confidence to seek support when needed**.

### Shaping support services to meet parents' needs

267. As well as making support service more accessible to those most in need, parents need to have confidence that the services available will provide them with the information and support they require. Overall, the survey showed that **a large majority of parents generally believe that existing services are useful**, which is certainly a positive platform on which to build. However, parents seem less certain that existing services are actually improving their parenting skills and confidence. Of course it may be the case that, as discussed in this report, there are occasions on which parents are simply requiring, say, some financial information to assist them in making a decision rather than looking for support to improve their parenting skills. If so, services may still be providing valuable assistance in this respect. Nonetheless, further qualitative research may be required to unpack the extent to which services can and should go beyond providing basic information to actually supporting or even coaching parents to improve their parenting skills. In this context:

- the survey indicated that more could be done to enable parents to shape services according to their particular needs.

At the moment, there seems to be **limited provision for parents to provide input** on their customer experiences in the form of feedback facilities, so this is an area that could be addressed.

## Appendix A - Parental Opinion Survey comparisons with Parental Involvement in Children's Education (PICE)

|   | Parental Opinion Survey | PICE        |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|
|   | %                       | %           |
| <b>Whether partner is more involved in child's school / nursery / college life</b>                            |                         |             |
| I am much more involved   | 23                      | 26          |
| I am a little more involved   | 12                      | 15          |
| Equally involved  | 33                      | 31          |
| My partner is a little more involved  | 15                      | 14          |
| My partner is much more involved  | 17                      | 14          |
| Not applicable  | *                       | -           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>   | <i>1371</i>             | <i>4277</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>   | <i>1108</i>             | <i>3627</i> |
| <b>Which ways of communicating feel should be used more by child's school / nursery / college<sup>1</sup></b> |                         |             |
| Parents' evenings   | 23                      | 8           |
| Talking to school / nursery / college staff informally, such as in the playground                             | 12                      | 9           |
| Other formal meetings with teachers   | 15                      | 8           |
| School / nursery / college reports / test results   | 12                      | 5           |
| Notes or letters or other written communication   | 18                      | 21          |
| Child tells me or I ask child   | 5                       | 1           |
| The school / nursery / college website  | 8                       | 3           |
| Emails  | 14                      | 16          |
| Text messages   | 4                       | *           |
| Phone calls from the school / nursery / college   | 11                      | 7           |
| Partner / wife / husband tells me   | 2                       | *           |
| Don't know  | 1                       | 29          |
| Other (specify)   | 2                       | 1           |
| None of these   | 8                       | 2           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>   | <i>1801</i>             | <i>4056</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>   | <i>1789</i>             | <i>4056</i> |
| <b>How often help child with their homework</b>   |                         |             |
| Every day   | 12                      | 32          |
| Several times a week  | 14                      | N/A         |
| One or two times a week   | 26                      | N/A         |
| One or two times a month  | 13                      | N/A         |
| Less often  | 11                      | N/A         |

<sup>1</sup> These comparative findings should be treated with caution due to the differing methodologies employed for the Parental Opinion Survey and PICE.

|  |             |             |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Most times   | N/A         | 26          |
| Occasionally   | N/A         | 31          |
| Never - child never gets homework  | 4           | 2           |
| Never - child does get homework but parent doesn't help                  | 12          | 2           |
| Never - don't know if child gets homework                                | 1           | 1           |
| Don't know   | *           | 1           |
| Depends what it is (Do not read out)                                     | 2           | 1           |
| When the child asks for help (Do not read out)                           | 6           | 6           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | <i>1597</i> | <i>5032</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | <i>1567</i> | <i>5032</i> |
|  |             |             |
| <b>How confident feel (would feel) helping child with their homework</b> |             |             |
| Always confident   | 36          | 33          |
| Confident most of the time   | 32          | 44          |
| Confident some of the time   | 18          | 19          |
| Never confident  | 9           | 1           |
| Depends what it is (Do not read out)                                     | 5           | 1           |
| Don't know   | 1           | 1           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | <i>1597</i> | <i>5032</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | <i>1567</i> | <i>5032</i> |

## Appendix B - Parental Opinion Survey comparisons with National Survey of Parents and Children (NSPC)

|   | Parental Opinion Survey | NSPC        |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>How involved personally feel in child's progress through school / nursery / college life</b> |                         |             |
| Very involved   | 40                      | 32          |
| Fairly involved   | 47                      | 53          |
| Not very involved   | 11                      | 14          |
| Not at all involved   | 1                       | 1           |
| Don't know  | *                       | *           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>   | <i>1801</i>             | <i>1912</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>   | <i>1789</i>             | <i>1889</i> |
| <b>Whether personally helped child learn basic skills in the last month</b>                     |                         |             |
| Yes   | 81                      | 92          |
| No  | 5                       | 2           |
| Does not apply yet - too young  | 14                      | 6           |
| Don't know  | -                       | -           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>   | <i>815</i>              | <i>697</i>  |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>   | <i>843</i>              | <i>698</i>  |
| <b>I find being a parent rewarding</b>  |                         |             |
| Most of the time  | 84                      | 82          |
| Some of the time  | 15                      | 16          |
| Hardly ever   | 1                       | *           |
| Never   | 1                       | *           |
| Don't want to answer  | *                       | *           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>   | <i>2341</i>             | <i>2572</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>   | <i>2345</i>             | <i>2572</i> |
| <b>I find being a parent frustrating</b>  |                         |             |
| Most of the time  | 10                      | 2           |
| Some of the time  | 58                      | 43          |
| Hardly ever   | 23                      | 36          |
| Never   | 9                       | 17          |
| Don't want to answer  | *                       | *           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>   | <i>2341</i>             | <i>2572</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>   | <i>2345</i>             | <i>2572</i> |
| <b>How often argue with child</b>   |                         |             |
| Most days   | 12                      | 10          |
| More than once a week   | 24                      | 38          |
| Less than once a week   | 23                      | 16          |
| Hardly ever   | 35                      | 29          |
| Never   | 6                       | 5           |



|  | Parental Opinion Survey | NSPC |
|--|-------------------------|------|
| Don't want to answer   | *                       | *    |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | 1537                    | 1831 |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | 1513                    | 1816 |
|  |                         |      |
| <b>How well / badly get on with child</b>  |                         |      |
| Very well  | 76                      | 76   |
| Fairly well  | 22                      | 21   |
| Fairly badly   | 1                       | 1    |
| Very badly   | *                       | *    |
| Don't want to answer   | *                       | *    |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | 1537                    | 1831 |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | 1513                    | 1816 |
|  |                         |      |
| <b>Statements about when child misbehaves. How often each apply...</b>                 |                         |      |
| <b>- I generally only get involved when he/she does something really serious</b>       |                         |      |
| Always applies   | 24                      | 20   |
| Applies most of the time   | 15                      | 17   |
| Applies some of the time   | 17                      | 19   |
| Rarely applies   | 21                      | 23   |
| Never applies  | 21                      | 17   |
| Don't want to answer   | 2                       | *    |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | 1908                    | 2078 |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | 1907                    | 2071 |
|  |                         |      |
| <b>- How I take action when s/he misbehaves can vary depending on how I am feeling</b> |                         |      |
| Always applies   | 8                       | 5    |
| Applies most of the time   | 14                      | 13   |
| Applies some of the time   | 31                      | 35   |
| Rarely applies   | 26                      | 29   |
| Never applies  | 20                      | 16   |
| Don't want to answer   | 1                       | 1    |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | 1908                    | 2078 |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | 1907                    | 2071 |
|  |                         |      |
| <b>- Child knows how I will respond if they do something wrong</b>                     |                         |      |
| Always applies   | 45                      | 37   |
| Applies most of the time   | 40                      | 42   |
| Applies some of the time   | 9                       | 12   |
| Rarely applies   | 3                       | 5    |
| Never applies  | 3                       | 2    |
| Don't want to answer   | 1                       | *    |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | 1908                    | 2078 |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | 1907                    | 2071 |
|  |                         |      |

|  | Parental Opinion Survey | NSPC        |
|--|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>- I don't always have the time or energy to get involved in handling child's misbehaviour</b> |                         |             |
| Always applies   | 4                       | 3           |
| Applies most of the time   | 4                       | 4           |
| Applies some of the time   | 13                      | 12          |
| Rarely applies   | 34                      | 41          |
| Never applies  | 44                      | 38          |
| Don't want to answer   | 1                       | *           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | <i>1908</i>             | <i>2078</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | <i>1907</i>             | <i>2071</i> |
| <b>- I have clear and consistent rules about how to handle different types of misbehaviour</b>   |                         |             |
| Always applies   | 35                      | 27          |
| Applies most of the time   | 10                      | 38          |
| Applies some of the time   | 12                      | 18          |
| Rarely applies   | 6                       | 9           |
| Never applies  | 5                       | 5           |
| Don't want to answer   | 1                       | *           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | <i>1908</i>             | <i>2078</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | <i>1907</i>             | <i>2071</i> |
| <b>In the last 12 months, have any problems with child...</b>                                    |                         |             |
| <b>- affected your mental health (e.g. caused depression)</b>                                    |                         |             |
| Yes, very often in the last 12 months  | 1                       | 1           |
| Yes, a fair amount in the last 12 months   | 3                       | 1           |
| Yes but only occasionally in the last 12 months  | 8                       | 5           |
| No, not at all in the last 12 months   | 83                      | 89          |
| Don't want to answer   | 2                       | 1           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | <i>2341</i>             | <i>2572</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | <i>2345</i>             | <i>2572</i> |
| <b>- Caused tension between you and your partner</b>   |                         |             |
| Yes, very often in the last 12 months  | 3                       | 2           |
| Yes, a fair amount in the last 12 months   | 5                       | 5           |
| Yes but only occasionally in the last 12 months  | 29                      | 34          |
| No, not at all in the last 12 months   | 51                      | 57          |
| Don't want to answer   | 3                       | 1           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>  | <i>2341</i>             | <i>2195</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>  | <i>2345</i>             | <i>1801</i> |

|   | Parental Opinion Survey | NSPC        |
|---|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>- Led to family rows</b>                     |                         |             |
| Yes, very often in the last 12 months           | 2                       | 2           |
| Yes, a fair amount in the last 12 months        | 3                       | 3           |
| Yes but only occasionally in the last 12 months | 15                      | 16          |
| No, not at all in the last 12 months            | 75                      | 78          |
| Don't want to answer                            | 1                       | *           |
| <i>Total weighted</i>                           | <i>2341</i>             | <i>2572</i> |
| <i>Total unweighted</i>                         | <i>2345</i>             | <i>2572</i> |

## Appendix C - Sample design

The survey was based on a representative sample of parents and carers of children aged 0-19 in England. The sample consisted of a core sample and a boost sample of parents living in deprived areas. This was designed to ensure adequate coverage of so-called “hard-to-reach” parents who might be over-represented in such areas.

Parent and carer was defined as *parents, step-parents, foster parents and guardians of child(ren) aged 0-19 who were either resident in their household or lived elsewhere.*

The sampling and eligibility criteria for the survey were consistent with the NSPC. The only difference was that non-resident parents were also deemed eligible. Non-resident parents refer to parents who lived at a separate address from their child. To be eligible to participate in the survey, non-resident parents had to have seen their child in the last 12 months or tried to make contact with their child in the last 12 months. This was to ensure that they were able to answer questions about their child which referenced the previous 12 months.

A random probability methodology was adopted, with a sample drawn from the small-user Postcode Address File. At each sampled address a dwelling unit was randomly selected where there was more than one at the address. Before selecting a parent for interview, where necessary the interviewer randomly selected a “parenting unit” from the sampled household. Parenting unit was defined as a set of parents or single parent of a child - households could contain more than one unit if for example there were three generations at an address (e.g. parent with teenage child with a child of their own). Random selection ensured that single parents living in multi-generational households were not under-represented in the survey. Within each parenting unit, where there were two parents, one was randomly selected for interview.

Interviewing was conducted using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). At the start of the interview, once information about all members of the household was collected, the computer randomly selected a child within the parenting unit to be used as the “reference child” during the interview. As the interview often focused on the parent/child bond, this enabled questions to be asked about one particular child, rather than all children present. Reference children selected covered the full age-range 0-19.

### Drawing the sample

DCSF had stressed the importance of ensuring that the survey adequately covered the views and behaviours of so-called “hard to reach” parents and their children. Although there is no clearly defined concept of this group, it was likely that this group will over-represent parents having low levels of engagement with their children’s education and wellbeing, who have low aspirations for themselves and / or their children, and who provide little parental support or guidance. In order to boost these types of households in a sample, we needed to use a demographic indicator to define the areas where we would expect to find a disproportionately high representation of such households. While income is by no means a predictor of this, it is a useful and cost-effective indicator. We therefore decided to draw a boost sample of deprived households in low income areas.

The list of postcode sectors was stratified by GOR, index of multiple deprivation and then proportion of population aged 0-19.

The sampling fraction for the postcode sectors of the 20 per cent most deprived households (based on the index of multiple deprivation) was set differently to the sampling fraction for other postcode sectors, such that, of the 2,300 target interviews the sample size of the 20% most deprived areas would be doubled to c.900.

In total 232 PSUs were sampled from PAF, of which 94 were in the deprived area sample. Within each PSU, 66-67 addresses were randomly selected to be issued to interviewers. In total 15,443 addresses were issued to interviewers, of which 6,204 were in the deprived area sample.

This aimed to produce 2,300 interviews based on the following assumptions:

**Parent sample:**

Issued sample = 15,443

8% deadwood (reducing sample to 14,208)

30% of households eligible (reducing sample to 4262)

55% response (achieving target sample of 2,300)

**Sample and respondent selection**

The research employed a random probability sampling technique. At each sampled address a dwelling unit was randomly selected where there was more than one at the address. Before selecting a parent for interview, where necessary the interviewer randomly selected a “parenting unit” from the sampled household, where a parenting unit was defined as a set of parents or single parent of a child - households could contain more than one unit if for example there were three generations at an address (e.g. parent with teenage child with a child of their own). Random selection ensured single parents living in multi-generational households were not under-represented in the survey. Within each parenting unit, where there were two parents, one was randomly selected for interview.

The selection was made using the Contact sheet issued for each sampled address (see ‘Assignment and contact at addresses’ section below for more details).

The objective of the sampling was to devise procedures which produced a representative sample of households containing children aged 0-19 in England.

**Assignments and contact at addresses**

Interviewers were allocated an assignment consisting of 66 randomly selected addresses located within the same postcode sector. Every address issued was accounted for on an Address Contact Sheet.

The Contact Sheet includes a ‘Kish grid’ that helped the interviewer perform a manual random selection in instances:

- where an address consisted of more than one dwelling unit;
- where a household contained more than one parenting unit (see section 2.5 for definition);
- or where a parenting unit consisted of more than one parent.

Before contact was attempted at any address in a new assignment, interviewers notified the police that they would be working in the area. This was considered particularly important given the likelihood that some parents or neighbours might be alarmed when asked whether they had any resident children (a necessary step in gauging eligibility for the survey). The name of the police station where registration took place was recorded at the front of the Contact Sheet.

In order to ensure that the greatest possible effort was made to establish household eligibility and achieve an interview with a parent or guardian, interviewers made a minimum of five calls at each address.

All interviewer performance was monitored and interviewers who had not previously worked on a random probability project were accompanied on their first day of fieldwork on the project. Interviewers were furthermore incentivised to achieve a high response rate, by paying a bonus sum for interviews achieved above a minimum threshold level.

## **Appendix D - Introductory letters**

As only a small proportion of households in the randomly selected sample were expected to consist of 0-19 year-old children, it was considered inefficient to send letters introducing the survey to every selected address. Instead, interviewers carried with them introductory letters that explained the aims of the survey, why particular addresses were selected, and the types of questions respondents could expect during the interviews. The documents also provided assurances on confidentiality and the contact names and direct line telephone numbers for DCSF and for BMRB researchers working on the project.

If interviewers were unable to make contact with any resident despite repeated calls at a given address, they posted letters to that address. Potential respondents wishing to know more about the survey or needing to get a message to an interviewer who has already contacted them had the option to do so by ringing the contact numbers for BMRB or DCSF.

45107734

Direct line: 020 8433 4349

Erica.garnett@bmrbl.co.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

### National Survey of Parents

The government's **Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)** is conducting a major new survey in order to better understand the characteristics of family life. The survey will help the government to improve the support and services parents need. It will be conducted by an independent research organisation, **BMRB Social Research**.


Your address has been selected at random from the Post Office's national list of addresses. If you or anyone else in the household has a **child aged between 0 and 19 that lives at this household or elsewhere**, we would like to interview one parent. To ensure accurate results we rely on voluntary co-operation of people in the selected homes - no-one else can take your place.

An interviewer working on behalf of BMRB will be asking for your assistance with the survey. They will provide identification.

All your answers will be **strictly confidential** and used only for research purposes. No-one will be able to identify your household from what you tell us.

We thank you for your help. If you have any questions the interviewer will be happy to answer them or you can contact Erica Garnett at BMRB on 020 8433 4349. If you are concerned about the authenticity of the survey, please give me a call on 020 7273 5980.

Yours sincerely,



Colin Stiles

Department for Children, Schools and Families



## **Appendix E - Questionnaire**

Interviews were conducted within the respondents' homes and recorded on the interviewers' laptops using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). The CAPI system enables the questionnaire to be contained on a laptop computer. The questions appear on the screen and the interviewer enters answers via the keyboard. The advantage of CAPI is that routing from one question to another (which may vary depending on the answers given) is automatic; therefore complex filtering, which would be difficult to administer using a paper questionnaire, is straightforward. Another advantage of CAPI is that data are transmitted via a modem from the interviewer's house to BMRB head office overnight, so "clean" data are immediately available, omitting the need for the punching and editing stages.

Since much of the content of the questionnaires was personal in nature, privacy was considered important. Where possible, interviewers sat alone in a room with the respondent and administered the questions outside the hearing of other household members.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections: an interviewer-administered section and a smaller self-completion section. For the interviewer-administered section, where respondents were expected to select the answers from a list, the list was presented either as a showcard or on screen (as instructed).

The self-completion section was preceded by a few practice questions intended to familiarise respondents with use of the laptop, and entry of multi-coded or single-coded responses. Interviewers were constantly on hand to help respondents if they made mistakes or could not proceed, and to offer reassurance. Questions designed for self-completion were read out by the interviewer only in exceptional instances, where respondents were happy to continue the interview but refused to use the computer.

## Parental Opinion Survey Wave 1 Main Stage Questionnaire

First I'd like to ask you a few questions about your accommodation and who lives here with you.

1. How many people live in this household INCLUDING YOURSELF? [QLIVHOS]

INTERVIEWER: ENTER NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE HOUSEHOLD. INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO USUALLY LIVE IN THIS HOUSEHOLD WHO ARE AWAY FOR UNDER 6 MONTHS.  
**HOUSEHOLD GRID**

2. INTERVIEWER: ENTER SELECTED ADULT RESPONDENT'S FIRST NAME - ASK IF NECESSARY [QNAM]

[IF ASKING ABOUT SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT PERSON IN THE HOUSEHOLD]

3. And what is the first name of the next person in your household? [QNAM 2-14]

*Note: The names entered in grid are used for text substitution in following questions (NAME). Gender, age and relationship to respondent are asked about every other person in the household.*

### GENDER OF ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

4. INTERVIEWER: CODE (RESPONDENTS) GENDER - ASK IF NECESSARY [QSX]  
Male 1  
Female 2

[IF ASKING ABOUT THE SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT PERSON IN THE HOUSEHOLD]

5. INTERVIEWER: CODE (NAME)'S GENDER - ASK IF NECESSARY [QSX]  
Male 1  
Female 2

### AGE OF ALL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

[IF ASKING ABOUT THE FIRST PERSON IN THE HOUSEHOLD]

6. What was your age last birthday? [QAG1]

Don't Know 1  
Refused 2

[IF ASKING ABOUT SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT PERSON IN THE HOUSEHOLD]

7. What was (NAME)'s age last birthday? [QAG]

Don't Know 1  
Refused 2

IF REFUSE TO GIVE ANY AGE OR DON'T KNOW ANY AGE AT Q6 AND / OR Q7 [IF 1 OR 2 AT QAG1 OR 1 OR 2 AT QAG]

8. Are you / Is [NAME]... [QAB1 or QAB]

READ OUT BANDS. IF NOT KNOWN, TRY TO GET BEST ESTIMATE

Under 3 1  
 3-5 2  
 6-10 3  
 11-15 4  
 16-17 5  
 18-19 6  
 20-24 7  
 25-35 8  
 36-45 9  
 46-55 10  
 56-65 11  
 65+ 12  
 Don't Know 13  
 Refused 14

## HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIPS

ASK FOR SECOND PERSON ONWARDS (ie. NOT RESPONDENT)

9. And what is [NAME's] relationship to you? [QREL]

PROMPT OR CHECK IF NECESSARY: So [NAME] is your...?

SHOWCARD 0

Husband 1  
 Wife 2  
 Partner 3  
 Son 4  
 Daughter 5  
 Step-son 6  
 Step-daughter 7  
 Adopted son 8  
 Adopted daughter 9  
 Foster son 10  
 Foster daughter 11  
 Grandson 12  
 Granddaughter 13  
 Brother 14  
 Sister 15  
 Biological father 16  
 Adoptive father 17  
 Step-father 18  
 Foster father 19  
 Biological mother 20  
 Adoptive mother 21  
 Step-mother 22  
 Foster mother 23  
 Mother's unmarried partner 24  
 Father's unmarried partner 25  
 Grandfather 26  
 Grandmother 27  
 Other relative (OPEN) 28  
 Other non-relative (OPEN) 29  
 Don't Know 30  
 Refused 31

[END OF HOUSEHOLD GRID]

10. Is there anyone else who normally lives here with you, that is people that may be away at the moment? [QANYELS]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't know 3  
Refused 4

IF THERE OTHERS WHO NORMALLY LIVE IN HOUSEHOLD BUT ARE AWAY AT  
MOMENT [IF 1 AT QANYELS]

11. And how many other people are away at the moment who normally live in the household? [QNUMELS]

INTERVIEWER: ENTER NUMBER OF PEOPLE

12. ENTER NAME OF EACH ADDITIONAL PERSON [QNAW]  
PERSON 1, 2, 3 ETC?

13. And what is [NAME's] relationship to you? [QREA]  
PROMPT OR CHECK IF NECESSARY: So [NAME] is your...?

SHOWCARD 0

Husband 1  
Wife 2  
Partner 3  
Son 4  
Daughter 5  
Step-son 6  
Step-daughter 7  
Adopted son 8  
Adopted daughter 9  
Foster son 10  
Foster daughter 11  
Grandson 12  
Granddaughter 13  
Brother 14  
Sister 15  
Biological father 16  
Adoptive father 17  
Step-father 18  
Foster father 19  
Biological mother 20  
Adoptive mother 21  
Step-mother 22  
Foster mother 23  
Mother's unmarried partner 24  
Father's unmarried partner 25  
Grandfather 26  
Grandmother 27  
Other relative (OPEN) 28  
Other non-relative (OPEN) 29  
Don't Know 30  
Refused 31

14. Please could you tell me where <NAME> currently is at present? [QWHE]  
Please read out the relevant number from this card. **SHOWCARD 1** CODE  
ONE ONLY

- Away with work / business (including armed forces) 1
- Student accommodation / college / university 2
- Prison 3
- Travelling 4
- Other (specify) 5
- Don't know 6
- Refused 7

IF THERE IS ONE CHILD IN HOUSEHOLD THAT RESPONDENT PARENT / CARER OF  
THEN THEY WILL BE SELECTED AS REFERENCE CHILD FOR SURVEY. [IF (<20 AT  
QAG OR 1-6 AT QAB) AND 3-10 AT QREL].

IF MORE THAN ONE ELIGIBLE CHILD ESTABLISHED THEN CAPI QUESTIONNAIRE  
SOFTWARE WILL AUTOMATICALLY SELECT A REFERENCE CHILD FOR THE  
SURVEY.

### **ABSENT CHILDREN**

IF NO CHILDREN AGED 0-19 AT Q7 OR Q8 [IF AGE NOT < 20 AT QAG OR  
NOT = 1-6 AT QAB]

15. How many children aged 0-19 do you have who do not live in this household?  
[QABSPAR]  
ENTER NUMBER OF CHILDREN

REPEAT Q16-Q23 FOR EACH OF RESPONDENTS CHILDREN THAT DOES NOT LIVE IN  
HOUSELD

16. What is the name of the first child aged 0-19 who does not live in this household?  
[QNAC]

17. INTERVIEWER: CODE (NAME)'S GENDER - ASK IF NECESSARY [QASX]  
Male 1  
Female 2

18. What was (NAME)'s age last birthday? [QAA]  
Don't Know 1  
Refused 2

IF DON'T KNOW AGE / REFUSED AGE AT 18 [IF 1 OR 2 AT QAA]

19. Is [NAME]... [QAAB]  
READ OUT BANDS. IF NOT KNOWN, TRY TO GET BEST ESTIMATE  
Under 3 1  
3-5 2  
6-10 3  
11-15 4  
16-17 5  
18-19 6  
Don't Know 7  
Refused 8

20. And what is (NAME)'s relationship to you? [QARE]  
PROMPT OR CHECK IF NECESSARY: So [NAME] is your...?  
SHOWCARD 2

Son 1  
Daughter 2  
Step-son 3  
Step-daughter 4  
Adopted son 5  
Adopted daughter 6  
Foster son 7  
Foster daughter 8  
Other (OPEN) 9  
Refused 10  
Don't know 11

21. Have you seen [name] in the last 12 months? [QASE]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Refused 3  
Don't know 4

IF NOT SEEN CHILD IN LAST 12 MONTHS AT Q21 [IF 2 AT QASE]

22. Are you trying to maintain frequent contact with [name]? [QATR]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Refused 3  
Don't know 4

IF TRYING TO MAKE CONTACT AT Q22 [IF 1 AT QATR]

23. And have you tried to make contact or tried to get access to see [name] in the last 12 months? [QA12]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Refused 3  
Don't know 4

IF RESPONDENT HAS ONE ELIGIBLE ABSENT CHILD (1 AT Q21 OR 1 AT Q23) THEN THAT CHILD WILL BE SELECTED AS REFERENCE CHILD FOR SURVEY. [IF 1 AT QABSPAR AND (<20 AT QAA OR 1-6 AT QAAB) AND 1-8 AT QARE AND (1 AT QASE AND 1 AT QA12)].

IF MORE THAN ONE ELIGIBLE CHILD ESTABLISHED THEN CAPI QUESTIONNAIRE SOFTWARE WILL AUTOMATICALLY SELECT A REFERENCE CHILD FOR THE SURVEY. [IF > 1 AT QABSPAR AND (<20 AT QAA OR 1-6 AT QAAB) AND 1-8 AT QARE AND (1 AT QASE AND 1 AT QA12)].

## SELECTED CHILD STATUS

IF SELECTED CHILD IS OLDER THAN TWO YEARS OF AGE AT Q7 OR Q8 OR Q18 OR Q19 [IF >2 AT QAG OR 3-6 AT QAB >2 AT QAA OR 2-6 AT QAAB]

24. Can I just check what [CYP] is doing at present? [QCHIDOI]

### SHOW CARD 3

IF 2 OR MORE ACTIVITIES, CODE HIGHEST ON LIST

Going to nursery / pre-school (include local authority and private day nurseries)

1

Going to school (including on holiday) 2

Going to sixth form college (including on holiday) 3

Going to college of Further Education / FE (including on holiday) 4

Going to university / higher education institute (including on holiday) 5

Being home-educated 6

In paid employment or self-employed (or temporarily away e.g. on holiday or sick leave) 7

On a Government scheme for employment training 8

Doing unpaid work for a business that you / he / she own(s), or that a relative owns 9

Waiting to take up paid work already obtained 10

Looking for paid work or a Government training scheme 11

Intending to look for work but prevented by temporary sickness or injury 12

Permanently unable to work because of long-term sickness or disability 13

Looking after home or family 14

Doing something else 15

Don't Know 16

IF SELECTED CHILD IS IN SCHOOL / SIXTH FORM COLLEGE / FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGE AT Q24 [IF 2 AT QCHIDOI OR 3 AT QCHIDOI OR 4 AT QCHIDOI]

25. Does [CYP]'s [school/college] charge fees for educating children? [QCHARFE]

IF SCHOOL FEES ARE PAID (E.G. SCHOLARSHIP), CODE AS YES

Yes 1

No 2

Don't know 3

26. Can you tell me what year [CYP] is in at school? [QCYEAR]

ENTER 1 FOR YEAR 1, 2 FOR YEAR 2 ETC. ENTER 0 FOR RECEPTION YEAR (YEAR ZERO).

Don't know 1

Refused 2

## RESPONDENT MARITAL STATUS

27. What is your current marital status? Are you... [QMARSTA]  
READ OUT AND SHOW SCREEN. CODE FIRST ANSWER.

Married 1  
Unmarried but living with a partner 2  
Separated 3  
Divorced 4  
Widowed 5  
Single (Never married) 6  
Civil partnership 7  
(DO NOT READ OUT) Refused 8

IF CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT Q27 [IF 7 AT QMARSTA]

28. INTERVIEWER: YOU HAVE CODED THAT THE RESPONDENT IS IN A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP WHICH WOULD MEAN THAT THEY ARE IN A SAME SEX RELATIONSHIP. IS THE RESPONDENT IN A SAME SEX RELATIONSHIP? [QSAMSEX]

Yes 1  
No 2

IF CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT Q27 AND IN SAME SEX RELATIONSHIP AT Q28 [IF 7 AT QMARSTA AND 1 AT QSAMSEX]

29. RECORD: INTERVIEWER: DOES THE RESPONDENT'S PARTNER LIVE IN THIS HOUSEHOLD? [QPARLIV]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

## SEGMENTATION QUESTIONS [QUESTIONS IN THIS SUB-SECTION WILL ENABLE US TO REPLICATE SEGMENTS FROM SEGMENTATION SURVEY]

30. Please could you tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements. [QDOI] (SEG)

- It's important my family thinks I'm doing well
- In general I feel very positive about myself

Definitely agree 1  
Tend to agree 2  
Neither agree nor disagree 3  
Tend to disagree 4  
Definitely disagree 5  
Don't know 6



31. Please tell me to what extent you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the following aspects of your current situation.[QCUR] (SEG)

SHOW SCREEN FOR EACH ITEM. CODE NOT APPLICABLE IF NOT RELEVANT TO RESPONDENT

- My health
- My home
- My relationship (IF HAVE PARTNER)
- My job
- The amount of “me” time I have
- My children’s behaviour
- The area I live in
- The amount of time my partner and I are able to spend together without the children (IF HAVE PARTNER)
- My life overall

Very satisfied 1  
Fairly satisfied 2  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 3  
Fairly dissatisfied 4  
Very dissatisfied 5  
Don’t want to answer 6  
Not applicable 7

32. I’m now going to read out some things people have said about training and qualifications. For each of these I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree... [QTRA] (SEG)

- Spending money on education or learning is an investment for a child’s future life
- How well [CYP] does at school (IF NOT AT SCHOOL: did at school) will affect how well s/he does in life

Strongly agree 1  
Agree 2  
Neither agree nor disagree 3  
Disagree 4  
Strongly disagree 5  
Don’t know 6

33. Now thinking more generally about being a parent, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements? [QAGR] (SEG)

RANDOMISE

- You worry about what YOU will do once your children (your child) leave(s) home
- If both parents work full-time when children are little, they will miss out on seeing them grow and develop
- Its usually better if one parent can look after the child themselves all the time
- Money is the best measure of success

Strongly agree 1  
Agree 2  
Neither agree nor disagree 3  
Disagree 4  
Strongly disagree 5  
Don’t know 6

34. The next question is about the different sorts of feelings parents might have when (CYP 0-5 caring for young children) (CYP 5-19 they are with their children). Please say which is closest to how you feel. [QCLOFEE] (SEG)

- When I am not with [CYP] I find myself thinking about him / her

Almost all the time 1  
Most of the time 2  
Some of the time 3  
Occasionally 4  
Very rarely 5  
Or never? 6  
Can't say 7

## PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT WITH CHILDREN'S LEARNING

IF SELECTED CHILD IS OLDER THAN TWO YEARS OF AGE AT Q7 OR Q8 OR Q18 OR Q19 AND GOING TO NURSERY/PRE-SCHOOL OR SCHOOL OR SIXTH FORM COLLEGE OR COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION AT Q24 [IF (>2 AT QAG OR 3-6 AT QAB >2 AT QAA OR 2-6 AT QAAB) AND 1-4 AT QCHIDO]

## INVOLVEMENT WITH SCHOOL

35. How involved do you personally feel in [CYP's] progress through [school / nursery / college] life? (*Read out*) [QINVLEE] (SEG)

Very involved 1  
Fairly involved 2  
Not very involved 3  
Not at all involved 4  
Don't know 5

IF MARRIED OR LIVING WITH PARTNER AT Q27 OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT Q27 AND PARTNER LIVES IN HOUSEHOLD AT Q29 [IF 1 OR 2 AT QMARSTA OR (7 AT QMARSTA AND 1 AT QPARLIV)]

36. And overall, would you say that you or your partner is more involved in [CYP's] [school / nursery / college] life? [QPARMOR] (PICE)

DO NOT READ OUT OR SHOW SCREEN.

*PROBE - AND IS THAT MUCH MORE, OR A LITTLE MORE?*

I am much more involved 1  
I am a little more involved 2  
Equally involved 3  
My partner is a little more involved 4  
My partner is much more involved 5  
Not applicable 6

37. And would you like to be more or less involved (in [CYP's] [school / nursery / college] life)? [QPARMO2]

More involved 1  
Less involved 2  
Happy with current level of involvement 3

IF SELECTED CHILD IS OLDER THAN TWO YEARS OF AGE AT Q7 OR Q8 OR Q18 OR Q19 AND GOING TO NURSERY/PRE-SCHOOL OR SCHOOL OR SIXTH FORM COLLEGE OR COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION AT Q24 [IF (>2 AT QAG OR 3-6 AT QAB >2 AT QAA OR 2-6 AT QAAB) AND 1-4 AT QCHIDO]

38. And when did you last have contact with [CYP's] [school / nursery / college]? By this, I mean any face to face or telephone discussions you have had with school staff, or communication by letter or email that you have sent or replied to. I am not referring to any general correspondence that the school has sent to parents. [QRECON]

Within the last week 1  
 Within the last fortnight 2  
 Within the last month 3  
 Within the last 2 months 4  
 3 to 5 months 5  
 6 months up to a year 6  
 Longer ago 7  
 DO NOT READ OUT: Never 8  
 Don't know 9

39. In the last 12 months, which, if any, of the following ways have you used to get information about how <CYP> is getting on at <school/nursery/college>? [QINFSC] (PICE)

SHOW SCREEN. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Parents' evenings 1  
 Talking to <school / nursery / college> staff informally, such as in the playground 2  
 Other formal meetings with teachers 3  
 From <school / nursery / college> reports / Test results 4  
 Notes or letters from <school / nursery / college> or other written communication 5  
 Child tells me or I ask child 6  
 The <school / nursery / college> website 7  
 Emails 8  
 Text messages 9  
 Phone calls from the <school/nursery/college> 10  
 Partner / wife / husband tells me 11  
 Don't know 12  
 Other (specify) 13

40. And which ways of communicating information do you feel should be used more by <CYP's> [school / nursery / college]? [QSCHCOM] (PICE)  
 MULTI-CODED. DO NOT READ OUT OR SHOW SCREEN.

Parents' evenings 1  
 Talking to <school / nursery / college> staff informally, such as in the playground 2  
 Other formal meetings with teachers 3  
 <school / nursery / college> reports / Test results 4  
 Notes or letters from <school / nursery / college> or other written communication 5  
 Child tells me or I ask child 6  
 The <school / nursery / college> website 7

Emails 8  
 Text messages 9  
 Phone calls from the <school / nursery / college> 10  
 Partner / wife / husband tells me 11  
 Don't know 12  
 Other (specify) 13  
 None of these 14

## MORE DETAILED INVOLVEMENT

IF SELECTED CHILD IS UNDER SIX YEARS OF AGE AT Q7 OR Q8 OR Q18 OR Q19 [IF <6 AT QAG OR 1 OR AT QAB >2 AT QAA OR 1 OR 2 AT QAAB]

41. In the last month, have you personally helped [CYP] learn basic skills, such as shapes, sizes, colours, numbers or the alphabet? [QBASKIL] (SEG)

READ OUT AND CODE ONE ONLY

Yes 1  
 No 2  
 Does not apply yet - too young 3  
 Don't know 4

ASK ALL

42. How often do you... [QACT] (MCS)  
SHOW SCREEN FOR EACH STATEMENT

- read to <CYP>?
- do musical activities with <CYP>?
- play sports or physically active games with <CYP>?
- play with toys or games indoors with <CYP>?
- take <CYP> to the park or an outdoor playground?

Every day 1  
 Several times a week 2  
 One or two times a week 3  
 One or two times a month 4  
 Less often 5  
 Never 5  
 Does not apply - too young / old 6

IF SELECTED CHILD IS OLDER THAN TWO YEARS OF AGE AT Q7 OR Q8 OR Q18 OR Q19 AND GOING TO SCHOOL OR SIXTH FORM COLLEGE OR COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION AT Q24 [IF (>2 AT QAG OR 3-6 AT QAB >2 AT QAA OR 2-6 AT QAAB) AND 2-4 AT QCHIDO]

43. How often do you help [CYP] with his/her homework, if at all? *if never, probe: Is that because [CYP] never gets homework or they get it but you don't help? (Read out)* [QHOMEWO] (PICE)

Every day 1  
 Several times a week 2  
 One or two times a week 3  
 One or two times a month 4  
 Less often 5  
 Never - child never gets homework 6

Never - child does get homework but parent doesn't help 7  
 Never - don't know if child gets homework 8  
 Don't Know 9  
 (Do not read out) Depends what it is 10  
 (Do not read out) When the child asks for help 11

44. How confident do you (if 'never': would you) feel helping [CYP] with their homework?  
*Read out and code most appropriate answer [QCONHOM] (PICE)*

Always confident 1  
 Confident most of the time 2  
 Confident some of the time 3  
 Never confident 4  
 (Do not read out) Depends what it is 5  
 Don't Know 6

## GENERAL INVOLVEMENT

ASK ALL

45. Please could you tell me how far you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. [QCON]  
 READ OUT. RANDOMISE LIST.

ASK ALL

- I feel confident in my ability to support [CYP's] learning and development
- I would like to be more involved in [CYP's] learning and development

IF SELECTED CHILD IS OLDER THAN TWO YEARS OF AGE AT Q7 OR Q8 OR Q18 OR Q19 AND GOING TO NURSERY / PRE-SCHOOL OR SCHOOL OR SIXTH FORM COLLEGE OR COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION AT Q24 [IF (>2 AT QAG OR 3-6 AT QAB >2 AT QAA OR 2-6 AT QAAB) AND 1-4 AT QCHIDO]

- <CYP>'s [school / nursery / college] makes it easy for me to be involved in my child's education
- <CYP>'s [school / nursery / college] gives me clear information on how my child is getting on
- If you talk too often to people in charge at [CYP]'s [school / nursery / college], you are labelled a trouble maker
- You know a lot about how you can help with [CYP]'s education

Strongly agree 1  
 Slightly agree 2  
 Neither agree nor disagree 3  
 Slightly disagree 4  
 Strongly disagree 5  
 Don't know 6

ASK ALL

46. And how do you feel about the amount of time you have available to spend with [CYP] in general? [QAMTIM2] (MCS - adapted)  
 READ OUT AND CODE ONE ONLY.

- Too much time - it interferes with other things I need / want to do 1
- About the right amount of time 2
- Not quite enough 3
- Nowhere near enough 4
- Don't know 5

## **INFORMATION / ADVICE AND CONFIDENCE IN SUPPORT SERVICES**

Next, I'm going to ask you about different types of information and advice that you may have received on 'parenting issues' in the last 12 months.

## **PARENTING INFORMATION / ADVICE SERVICES RESPONDENTS HAVE USED OR WOULD USE IN THE FUTURE**

ASK ALL

47. Parents can access information, advice or support from a number of different services. In the last 12 months, have you used services to get information, advice or support in any of the following areas? [QINFAD1] SHOW SCREEN AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Information or advice on pregnancy, maternity or babies (e.g. ante-natal, birth, paternity, support groups, advice on feeding, development or health) 1

Information or advice on childcare (e.g. childminders, nurseries, out of school clubs) Do not include use of childcare, we are interested in whether you have received information or advice about it 2

Information or advice on disability (e.g. learning disabilities, special educational needs) 3

Information or advice on Health (e.g. children's illnesses, immunisation, healthy eating, mental health) Do not include routine doctors visits, we are interested in advice or information sought on health 4

None of the above 5

48. ....And have you received information, advice or support in any of the following areas in the last 12 months? [QINFAD2] SHOW SCREEN AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Information or advice on finances (e.g. debts, loans, student finances) 1

Information or advice on law and rights (e.g. education law, family law, parents' rights, maternity / paternity) 2

Information or advice on relationships (e.g. counselling, teenagers, divorce, separation) 3

Information or advice on family support (e.g. bereavement, adoption, fostering, emotional support, parenting support / classes) 4

Information or advice on safety and protection (e.g. child protection, home safety, internet safety) 5

None of the above 6

49. ....Next, have you received information, advice or support in any of the following areas in the last 12 months? [QINFAD3] SHOW SCREEN AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Information or advice on schools (e.g. admissions, attendance, moving schools) 1

Information or advice on teenagers (e.g. sex education, smoking, drugs and alcohol, teenage pregnancy) 2

Information or advice on behaviour (e.g. anti-social behaviour, bullying, discipline) 3

Information or advice on sport and play (e.g. activities or facilities for babies, children or young people) 4

None of the above 5

### NOT CONTACTED / USED SERVICES

50. You said that you did not receive information or advice in the following areas. Have you needed information or advice in any of these areas in the last 12 months? [QINFNOT]  
SHOW SCREEN AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

CAPI - SHOW RESPONSES **NOT** MENTIONED AT Q47, Q48 AND Q49 (QINFAD1, QINFAD2 AND QINFAD3)

Not needed any information, advice or support

FOR EACH CATEGORY THAT NEEDED INFORMATION, ADVICE OR SUPPORT AT Q50 (QINFNOT)

51. Why did you not receive <area>? [QYNO]  
SHOW SCREEN AND CODE ONE ONLY.

Not aware could get this information, advice or support 1

Did not know where to go for this information, advice or support 2

Tried to contact services, but could not use them (e.g. could not get hold of the information / person to talk to) 3

Other (specify) 4

Don't know 5

FOR EACH CATEGORY THAT NEEDED INFORMATION, ADVICE OR SUPPORT AT Q50 (QINFNOT)

52. In what way would you have liked <area>? [QYWA]  
SHOW SCREEN AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Written material (e.g. leaflets, factsheets, books) 1

Website / internet / email 2

Telephone helpline / advice line 3

Face-to-face contact 4

Other (specify) 5

Don't know 6

## SERVICE / INFORMATION USERS

Q53 - Q62 ASKED IN LOOP FOR EACH AREA AT Q47, Q48 AND Q49 (QINFAD1, QINFAD2 AND QINFAD3) THAT RESPONDENT USED TO GET INFORMATION, ADVICE OR SUPPORT

IF MORE THAN TWO AREAS SELECTED AT Q47, Q48 and Q49 (QINFAD1, QINFAD2 AND QINFAD3), CAPI COMPUTER TO RANDOMLY SELECT 2 AREAS

Now thinking about the services you used or contacted in the last 12 months to get <area>

53. What type of organisation provided this service? [QORG]

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

INTERVIEWER: IF MORE THAN ONE MENTIONED - CODE TYPE OF ORGANISATION THAT PROVIDED MOST OF THE ADVICE, INFORMATION OR SUPPORT

- Health Visitor 1
- Childcare Provider 2
- Nursery or pre-school 3
- School 4
- College or University 5
- Local authority / Local council 6
- Local authority Family Information Service 7
- Library 8
- Local GP's surgery 9
- Classes about parenting or parenting support 10
- Local authority Children's Centre 11
- Charity 12
- Other (specify) 13
- Don't know 14

54. In what way did you receive the information, advice or support? [QWHA]  
SHOWSCREEN. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

- Written material (e.g. leaflets, factsheets, books) 1
- Website / internet / email 2
- Telephone helpline / advice line 3
- Face-to-face contact 4
- Other (specify) 5
- Don't Know 6

IF WEBSITE / INTERNET AT Q54 [IF 2 AT QWHA]

55. In which of the following ways did you use a website / the internet? [QUSE]  
READ OUT AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

- Browsed websites / internet sites for information
- Received information or advice via a chat room
- Received information or advice via e-mail

56. <IF MORE THAN ONE METHOD - Thinking of all the ways in which you received information, advice or support> is this how you wanted to receive it? [QWAN]  
CODE ONE ONLY

- Yes 1
- No 2
- Don't know 3



IF NO AT Q56 [IF 2 AT QWAN]

57. In what way did you want to receive the information, advice or support?  
[QDID]

SHOW SCREEN. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Written material (e.g. leaflets, factsheets, books) 1  
Website / internet / email 2  
Telephone helpline / advice line 3  
Face-to-face contact 4  
Other (specify) 5

58. How easy was it to get the information that you needed? [QEAS]

Very easy 1  
Quite easy 2  
Not very easy 3  
Not at all easy 4  
Don't know 5  
Refused 6

IF NOT VERY EASY / NOT ALL EASY AT Q58 [IF 3 OR 4 AT QEAS]

59. What barriers did you face? PROBE: In what way did you find it difficult?  
[QBAR]

Lack of information, advice or services available 1  
Poor quality advice, information or service 2  
Cost of information, advice or services 3  
Transport / difficult to get to services 4  
Other (specify) 5  
Don't know 6

60. How useful did you find this information, advice or support? [QUSA]

Very useful 1  
Quite useful 2  
Not very useful 3  
Not at all useful 4  
Don't know 5  
Refused 6

61. And to what extent do you think the information, advice or support you received has helped to improve your parenting skills or confidence? [QEXT]  
READ OUT

A lot 1  
A little 2  
Not at all 3  
Not applicable / not trying to improve skills / confidence (DO NOT READ OUT) 4  
Don't know 5

62. Have you had the opportunity since receiving the information, advice or support to provide any feedback? For example, has the service asked for your views or comments? [QFEE]

Yes 1

No 2

Don't know / can't remember 3

END OF LOOP

ASK ALL

63. If you needed to get information or advice about general or specific parenting issues, how confident are you that you would know where to go for this information? [QCONSPE]

Very confident 1

Quite confident 2

Not very confident 3

Not at all confident 4

DEPENDS ON ADVICE NEEDED (DO NOT READ OUT) 5

WOULD NOT NEED ANY ADVICE (DO NOT READ OUT) 6

Don't know 7

## INFORMAL PARENTING INFORMATION / ADVICE SERVICES

ASK ALL

64. How often have you spent time talking to other parents / carers about parenting issues in the last month? [QTALPAR]

READ OUT.

Every day 1

Several times a week 2

One or two times a week 3

One or two times a month 4

No time at all 5

Don't know 6

IF EVERY DAY OR SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK OR ONE OR TWO TIMES A WEEK OR ONE OR TWO TIMES A MONTH AT Q64 [IF 1 OR 2 OR 3 OR 4 AT QTALPAR]

65. Is this done...? [QHOWDON]

READ OUT AND CODE ALL THAT APPLY

At pre-arranged parent events (e.g. parent coffee mornings or other parenting classes or sessions) 1

Informally amongst friends that are parents / carers 2

When dropping off/picking up child(ren) at childminder / nursery / school 3

Other (specify) 4

ASK ALL

66. Excluding your own children and stepchildren, how much time, if any, do you spend talking to other family members about parenting issues? [QFAMEMB]  
PROMPT TO PRECODES

A large amount of time 1  
A small amount of time 2  
No time at all 3  
Don't know 4  
Refused 5

## FATHERS

67. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements.... [QFAT]

- Fathers are less involved in children's learning than mothers
- There are less opportunities for fathers to get involved in their children's learning than there are for mothers
- It is more difficult for fathers to get involved in their children's learning than it is for mothers

Strongly agree 1  
Agree 2  
Neither agree nor disagree 3  
Disagree 4  
Strongly disagree 5  
Don't know 6

## FATHERS ONLY

68. If a local group was set up in your local area specifically for fathers to discuss parenting issues and socialise with other fathers, how likely is it that you would attend? [QLOCALG]

Very likely 1  
Quite likely 2  
Not very likely 3  
Not at all likely 4

ALREADY ATTEND GROUP / PARENTING CLASS FOR FATHERS (DO  
NOT READ OUT) 5  
Don't know 6

IF NOT VERY / NOT AT ALL LIKELY AT Q68 [IF 3 OR 4 AT QLOCALG]

69. Why do you say that? [QWHYGRO]

Does not interest me 1  
I do not need to go to such a group / class 2  
I know enough fathers I can socialise / discuss parenting issues with 3  
Work demands (e.g. long hours, being away from work) 4  
Demands of domestic chores 5

- Demands of children 6
- Too tired 7
- Demands of course / study I am doing 8
- I am in poor health 9
- Don't know 10
- Other (specify) 11

## CONFIDENCE IN PARENTING SKILLS - RESPONDENT SELF-COMPLETION SECTION

The following questions are all about your family life and your relationship with your child(ren). Most questions will be about [CYP]. Please answer them honestly. The answers you give are completely confidential and no-one will find out what responses you have given.

The next questions are for you to answer yourself. Before you do this, I will show you how to enter your answers into the computer.

For some questions you can choose one answer and for others you can choose more than one answer. You can choose your answers from those listed on the screen by pressing the numbers next to the answer you want to give.

If you press the wrong key the interviewer can tell you how to change the answer. Just ask if you want help.

70. INTERVIEWER: HAS THE RESPONDENT ACCEPTED THE SELF-COMPLETION?  
[QSC] (SEG)

- Self-completion accepted 1
- Self-completion refused 2
- Completed by interviewer 3

IF NOT AGREE TO SELF-COMPLETION AT Q70 [IF 2 OR 3 AT QSC]

71. INTERVIEWER - CODE REASON(S) WHY RESPONDENT REFUSED OR WANTED INTERVIEWER TO COMPLETE. [QWHYNOT] (SEG)

- Didn't like computer 1
- Eyesight problems 2
- Other disability 3
- Objected to study 4
- Worried about confidentiality 5
- Problems reading / writing 6
- Ran out of time 7
- Language problems 8
- Couldn't be bothered 9
- Children present / tending to children 10
- Other people present in room 11
- Refused 12
- Other 13

IF AGREE TO SELF-COMPLETION AT Q70 [IF 1 AT QSC]

Here is an example of the first type of question where you have to choose one answer.

INTERVIEWER: TURN SCREEN TO RESPONDENT AND LET THE RESPONDENT ENTER THEIR ANSWERS WHILE YOU OBSERVE AND HELP IF NECESSARY.

PRESS THE NUMBER NEXT TO THE ANSWER YOU WANT TO GIVE. WHEN YOU HAVE DONE THIS PRESS THE KEY WITH THE RED STICKER TO MOVE TO THE NEXT QUESTION.

72. Have you used a computer before? [QTEST1] (SEG)

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No  | 2 |

THIS TIME YOU CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER IF YOU WANT. PRESS THE NUMBERS NEXT TO THE ANSWERS YOU WANT TO GIVE. AFTER EACH ANSWER YOU NEED TO PRESS THE SPACE BAR (THE LARGE BAR AT THE BOTTOM OF THE KEYBOARD).

WHEN YOU HAVE GIVEN ALL YOUR ANSWERS, PRESS THE KEY WITH THE RED STICKER TO MOVE TO THE NEXT QUESTION.

73. Which of these types of food do you like? [QTEST2] (SEG)

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| British  | 1 |
| French   | 2 |
| American | 3 |
| Italian  | 4 |
| Spanish  | 5 |
| Greek    | 6 |
| Asian    | 7 |
| Chinese  | 8 |

IF AGREE TO SELF-COMPLETION AT Q70 [IF 1 AT QSC]  
SELF COMPLETION BEGINS

You have now finished the practice questions. Please tell the interviewer you are ready to move on and hand the computer back for a moment.

IF RESPONDENT REQUESTS THAT SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWER AT Q70 [IF 3 AT QSC] INTERVIEWER WILL ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS INSTEAD.

ASK ALL

74. So firstly, for each of the following statements please type in a number to indicate which answer applies.  
[QATT] (SEG)

- I find being a parent rewarding
- I find being a parent frustrating

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Most of the time     | 1 |
| Some of the time     | 2 |
| Hardly ever          | 3 |
| Never                | 4 |
| Don't want to answer | 5 |

75. [IF CYP AGED 0-5: When I'm caring for <CYP>] [IF CYP AGED 6-19:  
When I'm with [<CYP>], I feel... [QCONF] (SEG)

Very lacking in confidence 1  
Fairly lacking in confidence 2  
Fairly confident 3  
Very confident 4  
Don't want to answer 5

ASK ALL

76. The next question is about how you feel about being a parent. For this question,  
please choose your response from the choice 1 to 5. [QPARATE] (MCS)

"I feel that I am..."

not very good at being a parent 1  
a person who has some trouble being a parent 2  
an average parent 3  
a better than average parent 4  
a very good parent 5  
Don't want to answer 6

IF CYP AGED 11-19: Young people often have arguments with their parents about things  
like friends, clothes, going out, and the time they have to come home. IF CYP AGED 6-10:  
Children often have arguments and disagreements with their parents.

IF CYP AGED 6+

77. How often would you say you argue with [CYP]? [QARGUE] (SEG)

Most days 1  
More than once a week 2  
Less than once a week 3  
Hardly ever 4  
Or never? 5  
Don't want to answer 6

IF CYP AGED 6+

78. All in all, how well or how badly would you say you get on with <CYP>?  
[QGETON] (SEG)

Very well 1  
Fairly well 2  
Fairly badly 3  
Very badly 4  
Don't want to answer 5

ASK ALL

79. And thinking about <CYP's> general behaviour, please type a number to indicate which answer applies for each of the following statements. [QBEH] (MCS)

- <CYP> is generally obedient and does what adults request
- I struggle to control <CYP's> behaviour
- I feel confident when having to deal with <CYP's> poor behaviour

Strongly agree 1  
Slightly agree 2  
Neither agree nor disagree 3  
Slightly disagree 4  
Strongly disagree 5  
Not applicable as <CYP> too young 6  
Don't want to answer 7

IF NOT CONFIDENT IN DEALING WITH POOR BEHAVIOUR AT Q79 [IF 4 OR 5 AT THIRD ITERATION AT QBEH]

80. Why do you not feel confident when dealing with CYP's poor behaviour?  
[QWHYNC]

Open ended 1  
Don't know 2

IF CYP AGED 3+

81. Now thinking about when <CYP> misbehaves or does something wrong. How much of the time would you say each of the following applies? [QMIS] (SEG)

- I generally only get involved when he / she does something really serious
- How I take action when s/he misbehaves can vary depending on how I am feeling
- <CYP> knows how I will respond if they do something wrong
- I don't always have the time or energy to get involved in handling <CYP's> misbehaviour
- I have clear and consistent rules about how to handle different types of misbehaviour

Always applies 1  
Applies most of the time 2  
Applies some of the time 3  
Rarely applies 4  
Never applies 5  
Don't want to answer 6

ASK ALL

82. In the last 12 months, have any problems with <CYP>... [QPRO] (SEG)

- Affected your mental health (e.g. caused depression)
- (IF HAVE PARTNER) Caused tension between you and your partner
- Led to major family rows

Yes, very often in the last 12 months 1  
Yes, a fair amount in the last 12 months 2  
Yes but only occasionally in the last 12 months 3  
No, not at all in the last 12 months 4  
Don't want to answer 5

IF AGREED TO SELF-COMPLETION AT Q70 [IF 1 AT QSC]

Thank you for completing this section. Your answers will be completely confidential. If you want to go back over any answers, the interviewer can tell you how to do this.

Please tell the interviewer that you have finished and he / she will press a key which will hide your answers, so that no-one can see them on the screen.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

ASK ALL

Finally, I'd like to ask you some questions about your accommodation and the people that live here.

ASK ALL

83. First of all, which of these best describes the accommodation you are living in at the moment? [QACCOMM]

SHOW CARD 4

Owned outright 1  
Being bought on a mortgage/bank loan 2  
Shared ownership (owns & rents property) 3  
Rented from a Council or New Town 4  
Rented from a Housing Association 5  
Rented privately 6  
Rent free 7  
Some other arrangement 8  
Don't know 9  
Refused 10

IF MORE THAN ONE PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD

84. In whose name is the accommodation owned or rented? [QHREF]

Name of person 1  
Don't know 2  
None of these 3



IF THERE ARE JOINT HOUSEHOLDERS AT Q84

85. You have told me that (names) jointly own or rent the accommodation. Which of them has the highest income (from earnings, benefits, pensions any other sources) / (Who in the household has the highest income (from earnings, benefits, pensions any other sources)) [IF DK OR NONE OF THESE AT QHREF]? [QHREF2]

IF TWO OR MORE JOINT HOUSEHOLDERS HAVE THE SAME INCOME, SELECT THE ELDEST.

IF RESPONDENT ASKS FOR PERIOD TO AVERAGE OVER - LAST 12 MONTHS, AS CONVENIENT.

PROMPT AS NECESSARY

- Is one joint householder the sole person with:
  - PAID WORK?
  - OCCUPATIONAL PENSION?

ASK ALL

86. Looking at this card, what are you doing at the moment?[QEMPLOY]  
**SHOWCARD 5.** CODE ONE ONLY.

Employed full-time 1  
Employed part-time 2  
Self employed 3  
Unemployed and looking for work 4  
Full time education 5  
Not in paid employment looking after family or home 6  
Retired 7  
Disabled or too ill to work 8  
Other 9  
Don't know 10  
Refused 11

IF MARRIED OR LIVING WITH PARTNER AT Q27 OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT Q27 AND PARTNER LIVES IN HOUSEHOLD AT Q29 [IF 1 OR 2 AT QMARSTA OR (7 AT QMARSTA AND 1 AT QPARLIV)]

87. And can I just check, looking at this card, what is your husband / wife / partner doing at the moment? [QPARDOL]  
**SHOWCARD 5.** CODE ONE ONLY.

Employed full-time 1  
Employed part-time 2  
Self employed 3  
Unemployed and looking for work 4  
Full time education 5  
Not in paid employment looking after family or home 6  
Retired 7  
Disabled or too ill to work 8  
Other 9  
Don't know 10  
Refused 11

IF RESPONDENT IS NOT HOUSEHOLD REFERENCE PERSON

88. Can I just check, is [HRP] currently in employment? (QHEFEM)

Yes 1  
No 2

IF HRP NOT IN EMPLOYMENT AT Q88 [IF 2 AT QHEFEM]

89. And has [HRP] ever been in employment? (QHEFEV)

Yes 1  
No 2

IF HOUSEHOLD REFERENCE PERSON IN PAID WORK OR LAST MAIN JOB IF NOT CURRENTLY WORKING BUT HAVE PREVIOUSLY WORKED (EXCLUDING FULL-TIME STUDENTS AND THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN UNEMPLOYED FOR MORE THAN A YEAR - WHO ARE ALLOCATED TO RESIDUAL CATEGORIES)

90. What <does/did> the firm/organisation <you/household reference person> work(ed) for mainly make or do (at the place where you work(ed))? [QNSSEC]  
PROBEMANUFACTURING OR PROCESSING OR  
DISTRIBUTING AND MAIN GOODS PRODUCED, MATERIALS  
USED, WHOLESALE OR RETAIL ETC.

Open-ended 1  
Don't know 2

91. What <is/was> <your/ household reference person's> (main) job?  
[QNSSEC2]

Open-ended 1  
Don't know 2

92. What <do/did> <you/ household reference person> mainly do in <your/their> job?  
[QNSSEC3]  
CHECK SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS/TRAINING NEEDED  
TO DO THE JOB

Open-ended 1  
Don't know 2

93. <Are/was> <you/household reference person> working as an employee or <are/were> <you/household reference person> self-employed? [QNSSEC4]

THE DIVISION BETWEEN EMPLOYEES AND SELF-EMPLOYED IS BASED ON RESPONDENT'S OWN ASSESSMENT OF THEIR/HOUSEHOLD REFERENCE PERSON'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN THEIR MAIN JOB.

Employee 1  
Self-employed 2  
Don't know 3

IF EMPLOYEE AT Q93 [IF 1 AT QNSSEC4]

94. In <your/ household reference person's> job, <do/did> <you/household reference person> have any formal responsibility for supervising the work of other employees?"? [QNSSEC5]

DO NOT INCLUDE: SUPERVISORS OF CHILDREN, FOR EXAMPLE TEACHERS, NANNIES, CHILDMINDERS; SUPERVISORS OF ANIMALS; PEOPLE WHO SUPERVISE SECURITY OR BUILDINGS ONLY, FOR EXAMPLE CARETAKERS, SECURITY GUARDS

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't know 3

95. How many people work(ed) for <your/ household reference person's> employer at the place where <you/they> work(ed)? [QNSSEC6]

- WE ARE INTERESTED IN THE SIZE OF THE 'LOCAL UNIT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT' AT WHICH THE RESPONDENT WORKS IN TERMS OF TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES. THE 'LOCAL UNIT' IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION WHERE THE JOB IS MAINLY CARRIED OUT. NORMALLY THIS WILL CONSIST OF A SINGLE BUILDING, PART OF A BUILDING, OR AT THE LARGEST A SELF-CONTAINED GROUP OF BUILDINGS.
- IT IS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES AT THE RESPONDENT'S WORKPLACE THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN, NOT JUST THE NUMBER EMPLOYED WITHIN THE PARTICULAR SECTION OR DEPARTMENT IN WHICH HE/SHE WORKS.

Were there... PROMPT TO PRE-CODES

1 to 24 1  
25 to 499, or 2  
500 or more employees? 3  
Don't know 4

IF SELF-EMPLOYED AT Q93 [IF 2 AT QNSSEC4]

96. <Are/were> <you/ household reference person> working on <your/their> own or <do/did> <you/they> have employees? [QNSSEC7]

On own/with partner(s) but no employees 1  
With employees 2  
Don't know 3

IF HAVE EMPLOYEES AT Q96 [IF 2 AT QNSSEC7]

97. How many people <do/did> <you/ household reference person> employ at the place where <you/they> work(ed)? [QNSSEC8]

Were there... PROMPT TO PRE-CODES

1 to 24 1  
25 to 499, or 2  
500 or more employees? 3  
Don't know 4

ASK ALL

98. At what age did you finish your continuous, full-time education at school or college? [QFINEDU]

Not yet finished 1  
Refused 2  
Don't know 3

99. Do you have any qualifications? [QUALIFI]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

IF HAVE QUALIFICATIONS AT Q99 [IF 1 AT QUALIFI]

100. Starting from the top of this list, please look down the list of qualifications and tell me the number of the first one you come to that you have passed. [QUALTYP]

**SHOWCARD 6**

Higher degree / postgraduate qualifications 1  
First degree (including BEd) 2  
Postgraduate Diplomas / Certificates (including PGCE) 3  
Professional qualifications at Degree level (e.g. chartered accountant / surveyor) 4  
NVQ / SVQ Level 4 or 5 5  
Diplomas in higher education / other HE qualification 6  
HNC / HND / BTEC higher 7  
Teaching qualifications for schools / further education (below degree level) 8  
Nursing / other medical qualifications (below degree level) 9  
RSA Higher Diploma 10  
A / AS levels / SCE higher / Scottish Certificate 6th Year Studies 11  
NVQ / SVQ / GSVQ level 3 / GNVQ Advanced 12  
ONC / OND / BTEC National 13  
City and Guilds Advanced Craft / Final level / Part III 14  
RSA Advanced Diploma 15  
Trade Apprenticeships 16  
O level / GCSE Grades A\*-C / SCE Standard / Ordinary Grades 1-3 17  
NVQ / SVQ / GSVQ level 2 / GNVQ intermediate 18  
BTEC / SCOTVEC First / General diploma 19

City and Guilds Craft / Ordinary level / Part II / RSA Diploma 20  
 O level / GCSE grade D-G / SCE Standard / Ordinary grades below 3 21  
 NVQ / SVQ / GSVQ level 1 / GNVQ foundation 22  
 BTEC / SCOTVEC First / General certificate 23  
 City and Guilds Part I / RSA Stage I-III 24  
 SCOTVEC modules / Junior Certificate 25  
 Other qualifications including overseas (SPECIFY) 26  
 Don't Know 27  
 Refused 28

IF MARRIED OR LIVING WITH PARTNER AT Q27 OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT Q27 AND PARTNER LIVES IN HOUSEHOLD AT Q29 [IF 1 OR 2 AT QMARSTA OR (7 AT QMARSTA AND 1 AT QPARLIV)]

101. Does your partner have any qualifications? [QPARQUA]

Yes 1  
 No 2  
 Don't Know 3  
 Refused 4

IF PARTNER HAS QUALIFICATIONS AT Q101 [IF 1 AT QPARQUA]

102. Starting from the top of this list, please look down the list of qualifications and tell me the number of the first one you come to that they have passed. [QPARTYP]

**SHOWCARD 6**

Higher degree / postgraduate qualifications 1  
 First degree (including BEd) 2  
 Postgraduate Diplomas / Certificates (including PGCE) 3  
 Professional qualifications at Degree level (e.g. chartered accountant / surveyor) 4  
 NVQ / SVQ Level 4 or 5 5  
 Diplomas in higher education / other HE qualification 6  
 HNC / HND / BTEC higher 7  
 Teaching qualifications for schools / further education (below degree level) 8  
 Nursing / other medical qualifications (below degree level) 9  
 RSA Higher Diploma 10  
 A / AS levels / SCE higher / Scottish Certificate 6th Year Studies 11  
 NVQ / SVQ / GSVQ level 3 / GNVQ Advanced 12  
 ONC / OND / BTEC National 13  
 City and Guilds Advanced Craft / Final level / Part III 14  
 RSA Advanced Diploma 15  
 Trade Apprenticeships 16  
 O level / GCSE Grades A\*-C / SCE Standard / Ordinary Grades 1-3 17  
 NVQ / SVQ / GSVQ level 2 / GNVQ intermediate 18  
 BTEC / SCOTVEC First / General diploma 19  
 City and Guilds Craft / Ordinary level / Part II / RSA Diploma 20  
 O level / GCSE grade D-G / SCE Standard / Ordinary grades below 3 21  
 NVQ / SVQ / GSVQ level 1 / GNVQ foundation 22  
 BTEC / SCOTVEC First / General certificate 23  
 City and Guilds Part I / RSA Stage I-III 24  
 SCOTVEC modules / Junior Certificate 25  
 Other qualifications including overseas (SPECIFY) 26  
 Don't Know 27  
 Refused 28

ASK ALL

I am now going to ask you about your income. I only need to know an approximate amount.

Please can you tell me your personal income from all sources in the last year? This includes earnings from employment or self-employment, income from benefits and pensions, and income from other sources such as interest and savings.

103. Please look at this card and tell me which letter represents your TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME in the last year from all sources BEFORE tax and other deductions.  
[QYOUINC]

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ONLY INCLUDE INCOME OF RESPONDENT

TEXT ON **SHOW CARD 7**:

| Annual               | Weekly          | Monthly         |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| H. Under £2,500      | Under £50       | Under £200      |
| B. £2,500 - £4,999   | £50 - £99       | £200 - £399     |
| J. £5,000 - £9,999   | £100 - £199     | £400 - £829     |
| F. £10,000 - £14,999 | £200 - £289     | £830 - £1,249   |
| N. £15,000 - £19,999 | £290 - £389     | £1,250 - £1,649 |
| A. £20,000 - £24,999 | £390 - £489     | £1,650 - £2,099 |
| G. £25,000 - £29,999 | £490 - £579     | £2,100 - £2,499 |
| O. £30,000 - £34,999 | £580 - £679     | £2,500 - £2,899 |
| D. £35,000 - £39,999 | £680 - £769     | £2,900 - £3,349 |
| L. £40,000 - £44,999 | £770 - £869     | £3,350 - £3,749 |
| M. £45,000 - £49,999 | £870 - £969     | £3,750 - £4,149 |
| I. £50,000 - £59,999 | £970 - £1,149   | £4,150 - £4,999 |
| C. £60,000 - £74,999 | £1,150 - £1,449 | £5,000 - £6,249 |
| E. £75,000 - £99,999 | £1,450 - £1,919 | £6,250 - £8,299 |
| K. £100,000 or more  | £1,920 or more  | £8,300 or more  |

ANSWER LIST ON SCREEN:

A 1  
B 2  
C 3  
D 4  
E 5  
F 6  
G 7  
H 8  
I 9  
J 10  
K 11  
L 12  
M 13  
N 14  
O 15  
Don't Know 16  
Refused 17

IF MARRIED OR LIVING WITH PARTNER AT Q27 OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT Q27 AND PARTNER LIVES IN HOUSEHOLD AT Q29 [IF 1 OR 2 AT QMARSTA OR (7 AT QMARSTA AND 1 AT QPARLIV)]

I am now going to ask you about your partner's income. I only need to know an approximate amount.

Please can you tell me your PARTNER'S personal income from all sources in the last year? This includes earnings from employment or self-employment, income from benefits and pensions, and income from other sources such as interest and savings.

104. Please look at this card and tell me which letter represents their TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME in the last year from all sources BEFORE tax and other deductions.  
[QPARINC]

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ONLY INCLUDE INCOME OF RESPONDENTS' PARTNER

TEXT ON **SHOW CARD 7**:

| Annual               | Weekly          | Monthly         |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| H. Under £2,500      | Under £50       | Under £200      |
| B. £2,500 - £4,999   | £50 - £99       | £200 - £399     |
| J. £5,000 - £9,999   | £100 - £199     | £400 - £829     |
| F. £10,000 - £14,999 | £200 - £289     | £830 - £1,249   |
| N. £15,000 - £19,999 | £290 - £389     | £1,250 - £1,649 |
| A. £20,000 - £24,999 | £390 - £489     | £1,650 - £2,099 |
| G. £25,000 - £29,999 | £490 - £579     | £2,100 - £2,499 |
| O. £30,000 - £34,999 | £580 - £679     | £2,500 - £2,899 |
| D. £35,000 - £39,999 | £680 - £769     | £2,900 - £3,349 |
| L. £40,000 - £44,999 | £770 - £869     | £3,350 - £3,749 |
| M. £45,000 - £49,999 | £870 - £969     | £3,750 - £4,149 |
| I. £50,000 - £59,999 | £970 - £1,149   | £4,150 - £4,999 |
| C. £60,000 - £74,999 | £1,150 - £1,449 | £5,000 - £6,249 |
| E. £75,000 - £99,999 | £1,450 - £1,919 | £6,250 - £8,299 |
| K. £100,000 or more  | £1,920 or more  | £8,300 or more  |

ANSWER LIST ON SCREEN:

A 1  
B 2  
C 3  
D 4  
E 5  
F 6  
G 7  
H 8  
I 9  
J 10  
K 11  
L 12  
M 13  
N 14  
O 15  
Don't Know 16  
Refused 17

ASK ALL

105. What is your ethnic group? [QETHNIC]

CHOOSE ONE SECTION FROM A TO E, THEN SELECT THE APPROPRIATE  
OPTION TO INDICATE YOUR ETHNIC GROUP

SHOWCARD

TEXT ON **SHOW CARD 8**:

A. White

1. British

2. Irish

3. Any Other White background, *please write in*

---

B. Mixed

4. White and Black Caribbean

5. White and Black African

6. White and Asian

7. Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*

---

C. Asian or Asian British

8. Indian

9. Pakistani

10. Bangladeshi

11. Any Other Asian background, *please write in*

---

D. Black or Black British

12. Caribbean

13. African

14. Any Other Black background, *please write in*

---

E. Chinese or other ethnic group

15. Chinese

16. Any Other, please write in

ANSWER LIST ON SCREEN:

White - British 1

White - Irish 2

Any Other White background 3

Mixed - White and Black Caribbean 4

Mixed - White and Black African 5

Mixed - White and Asian 6

Any Other Mixed background 7

Asian - Indian 8

Asian - Pakistani 9

Asian - Bangladeshi 10

Any Other Asian background 11

Black - Caribbean 12

Black - African 13

Any Other Black background 14

Chinese 15

Any Other 16

Don't Know 17

Refused 18



IF MARRIED OR LIVING WITH PARTNER AT Q26 OR CIVIL PARTNERSHIP AT Q26 AND PARTNER LIVES IN HOUSEHOLD AT Q28 [IF 1 OR 2 AT QMARSTA OR (7 AT QMARSTA AND 1 AT QPARLIV)]

106. What is your partner's ethnic group? [QPARETH]

CHOOSE ONE SECTION FROM A TO E, THEN SELECT THE APPROPRIATE OPTION TO INDICATE YOUR PARTNER'S ETHNIC GROUP [SHOW CARD 8](#)

SAME ANSWER LIST AS Q105

ASK ALL

107. What is [CYP]'s ethnic group? [QCYPETH]

CHOOSE ONE SECTION FROM A TO E, THEN SELECT THE APPROPRIATE OPTION TO INDICATE [CYP]'S ETHNIC GROUP [SHOW CARD 8](#)

SAME ANSWER LIST AS Q105

108. Which of these religious groups do you belong to, if any? [QRELIGI]  
[SHOW CARD 9](#)

- None 1
- Christian - Catholic 2
- Christian - Church of England 3
- Christian - Other 4
- Buddhist 5
- Hindu 6
- Jewish 7
- Muslim 8
- Sikh 9
- Don't know 10
- Refused 11
- Other (specify) 12

IF BELONGS TO A RELIGIOUS GROUP AT Q108 [IF NOT 1 OR 10 OR 11 AT QRELIG]

109. Would you say you are practising your religion these days or not?  
[QPRACRE]

- Yes 1
- No 2
- Don't know 3

110. To what extent, if at all, do your religious beliefs influence the way you act as a parent?  
Please choose an answer from this screen. [QRELINF]  
[SHOW SCREEN](#)

- A great deal 1
- A fair amount 2
- Not very much 3
- Not at all 4
- Don't Know 5

ASK ALL

111. Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time? [QILLNES]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

IF HAVE ILLNESS AT Q111 [IF 1 AT QILLNES]

112. Does this illness or disability (Do any of these illnesses or disabilities) limit your activities in any way? [QILLIMI]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

IF HAVE ILLNESS AT Q111 [IF 1 AT QILLNES]

113. Does this illness or disability mean that you have significant difficulties with any of these areas of your life? [QILLSIG]

SHOW SCREEN. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Mobility (moving about) 1  
Speech 2  
Hearing 3  
Eyesight 4  
Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand 5  
Physical co-ordination (e.g. balance) 6  
None of the above 7

ASK ALL

114. Does [CYP] have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By long-standing I mean anything that has troubled them over a period of time or that is likely to affect them over a period of time? [QCYPILL]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

IF CYP HAS LONG STANDING ILLNESS AT Q114 [IF 1 AT QCYPILL]

115. Does this illness or disability (Do any of these illnesses or disabilities) limit their activities in any way? [QCYPLIM]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

ASK ALL

116. Does [CYP] have special educational needs? [QCYPSEN]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

IF CHILD HAS SPECIAL NEEDS AT Q116 [IF 1 AT QCYPSEN]

117. Does [CYP] have a Statement of Special Educational Needs? [QCYPSTA]

Yes 1  
No 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

IF CHILD HAS STATEMENT AT Q117 OR SPECIAL NEEDS AT Q116 [IF 1 AT QCYPSTA OR 1 AT QCYPSEN]

118. Does [CYP] go to a mainstream school or a special school for those with Special Educational Needs? [QCYPSCH]

Mainstream school 1  
Special school 2  
Don't Know 3  
Refused 4

ASK ALL

119. Finally, can I check, do you have any difficulty in everyday life with any of the following? You can choose more than one answer if you want to. [QDIFFIC]  
READ OUT.

Speaking in English 1  
Reading in English 2  
Writing in English 3  
Using numbers or basic maths 4  
NONE OF THE ABOVE 5  
Can't say 6  
Don't want to answer 7

120. INTERVIEWER RECORD: DID THE RESPONDENT HAVE ANY DIFFICULTIES READING OR UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH? [QINTREC]

Yes, a LOT of difficulty 1  
Yes, SOME difficulty 2  
No 3

121. Is English the first or main language of your household? [QENG FIR]

Yes 1

No 2

IF ENGLISH IS FIRST OR MAIN LANGUAGE IN HOUSEHOLD AT Q121 [IF 1  
AT QENG FIR]

122. Is English the only language or are other languages spoken? [QENG ONL]

Yes, English only 1

No, English is first language but other languages also spoken 2

No, another language is household's first language 3

Household is bi-lingual 4

Don't know 5

Refused 6

ASK ALL

## RECONTACT

123. Would you be willing for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), or someone working on behalf of the Department, to contact you again in the future as a follow-up to this survey? [QRECONT]

Yes 1

No 2

## **Appendix F - The recreation of the Segmentation of Parents and Carers**

### **Summary**

This section outlines the background to the recreation of the Segmentation of Parents and Carers on the Parental Opinion Survey. It outlines why and how the segments were originally formed, how they were recreated, and summarises how they compare to the original segments formed on the National Survey of Parents and Children (NSPC).

#### **1. Why the segments were originally formed**

The segments were originally formed as part of the NSPC to assist the DCSF in their understanding of different perspectives and experiences of parents and children, with the aim to identify the likely incentives and motivations that are important to different parenting types.

#### **2. How the original segments were formed**

A range of questions were combined in the NSPC survey to create a number of dimensions associated with parenting (for example, 'extent that identity is linked to children' and 'involvement in education'). These dimensions were then used to develop nine segments by identifying similarities within a group and differences from other groups. It should be noted however, that these segments are approximations (as with all segmentations of society), and not all people will fall neatly into a segment. People will approximate to one of them, rather than 'be' one of them. People may also share common attributes with one or more of the other segments.

The nine segments that were identified were:

##### **A1. Comfortable and Confident**

Parents in this segment are generally content and optimistic about their lives, enjoy parenting and spending time with their children.

They place high importance on education, tend to be very much involved in their children's learning and to be confident about what they can do to help. Most did fairly well or better in education themselves and would like their children to do at least as well.

Their children tend to be young. Typically they are part of a couple where both parents work and enjoy medium-high incomes.

##### **A2. Committed but discontented**

Although this segment sometimes finds parenting frustrating and difficult to cope with, they are very committed to their family. They are often dissatisfied with their home and the area that they live in and they tend to have a lower than average income.

It is important to them that their children do well in life and they tend to worry about them reaching their full potential. They value education highly for its importance to their children's future and are more involved than average in their children's progress.

Parents in this segment are more likely to be women, with a higher than average proportion of single parents.

### **A3. Struggling through**

This segment sometimes finds parenting frustrating or difficult to cope with and even unrewarding. Although they are likely to say that spending time together as a family can be fun some of the time, they tend to feel that they do not get enough quality time together.

They tend to be less confident than other parent segments, and are less likely to be very satisfied with their environment. They tend to have lower than average income.

They are the least engaged parent segment with education - they are unlikely to feel it will have a strong impact on how well their child does in life, and are more likely than other parent segments to think that getting a job and learning a skill is more important to their children doing well in life.

Most have younger children, with a higher than average proportion of single parents and they are more likely to have had their children in their teens or early twenties.

### **A4. Supportive but Frustrated**

Although they sometimes find parenting frustrating or difficult to cope with, parents in this segment enjoy spending time with their family. They tend to have consistent rules and resolve conflicts constructively. They are satisfied with their environment but are not as confident and optimistic as some parent segments.

It is important to them that their children do at least as well in life as they have. Although they tend to feel that they did 'average' in education, they believe that education is important and are more likely than average to be very involved in their children's learning, but are less confident than other parents..

Their children cross all age bands but are unlikely to be older teenagers. Parents in this segment are more likely to be women.

### **A5. Relaxed and caring**

This segment enjoys the time that they spend with their children, and rarely finds parenting difficult to cope with. They tend to be very focussed on family over money and career and are very likely to consider stay-at-home parenting to be desirable.

They tend to be fairly satisfied with their environment and are less likely to be single parents or part of a stepfamily.

They are more likely to believe that children should be allowed to develop at their own pace and are more concerned about their children's happiness than their academic success - typically they have children under age 10. They are more likely than average to get involved with their children's learning, although not to so high a degree as some other parent segments more focussed on education.

### **A6. Stepping back**

Although the majority of parents in this segment find parenting rewarding, it is not without its frustrations.

They tend to believe that stay-at-home parenting is desirable, but are no more likely than average to be doing this.

They believe in the importance of education for how well their children will do in life, but tend to not be very involved or to push them all that much.

The majority are older (aged over 35), with more children in their late teens - they are likely to have higher than average household income.

#### **A7. Separate lives**

Enjoyment of parenting tends to be lower than average in this segment, but the majority of parents feel that they are able to cope most of the time. They are likely to say that they get on at least fairly well with their children and enjoy spending time with them some of the time.

They are less likely to say that it is very important to them that their children do better in life than they did, and in general they tend to be less involved in their children's lives than most other parent segments. They are much less likely to feel that education will affect how well their child does in life, and they are also less likely to feel very involved in their learning.

Parents in this segment are more likely than average to be men and tend to be older (aged over 35) with their children more likely to be at secondary school.

#### **A8. Family focused**

These parents are likely to be satisfied with their environment and find parenting enjoyable and rewarding. They tend to say that they get on very well with their children and are happy with the amount of time they spend together.

They are more likely to have a consistent routine and rules, and believe parents should be a role model to their children. They tend to agree that stay-at-home parenting is desirable and that their needs should take less priority than those of their children.

They are more likely to worry about their children reaching their full potential, and see education as being important to helping them achieving this - they are the segment most likely to say they feel very involved in their children's educational progress.

Their children tend to be aged under 14.

#### **A9. Content and Self-fulfilled**

This segment rarely finds parenting frustrating or difficult to cope with and tend to get on well with their children without many arguments - the vast majority are happy with how close they are as a family.

They tend to be confident, optimistic and satisfied with their lives. They are also quite independent, and are more likely to have their own interests outside the family and a large network of friends.

They recognise the importance of education but are not particularly highly involved in their children's learning. They are less likely to say that it is very important to them that their children do better in life than they have done.

Parents in this segment are typically part of a couple aged over 40, with teenage children; both partners in work, with higher than average household income.

### **3. How the segments were recreated for the Parental Opinion Survey**

A large number of questions were used to form the original segments for the NSPC survey. To recreate these segments for subsequent surveys, formulae were developed that allocate respondents to the segment closest to their parental characteristics. To use all the original questions used to form the segments would be a notable burden on any subsequent surveys. Consequently, a subset of seventeen relevant questions were identified that best allocated respondents to their associated segment (a 76% accuracy rate overall). This keeps the number of questions needed to an operable amount, with regard to questionnaire content, relevancy and length.

The 17 questions were;

Q4

Q6

Age of children in household - Q7

Q30 - Iteration 1 and 2

Q31 - Iterations 1, 2 and 7

Q32 - Iteration 1 and 2

Q33 - Iteration 1, 2 and 3

Q34

Q35

Q74 - Iteration 2

### **4. How the segments in the Parental Opinion Survey compare to the initial segments**

Using the seventeen questions and the formulae developed for allocating parents into segments we were able to successfully replicate the segments for Parental Opinion Survey. When comparing the segments recreated for the Parental Opinion Survey with the original segments from the National Survey of Parents and Children it is very important to remember that the purpose of the recreation was to ensure parents were placed into segments most closely resembling their combinations of attitudes towards parenting. The recreation was never intended to be an exercise in replicating the same proportion of parents allocated within each segment or to have an exact replication in terms of the demographic profile making up each segment (although similarities would be expected).

Table 1 shows that the socio-demographic characteristics of parents taking part in the Parental Opinion Survey and NSPC were very similar.



| <b>Table 1; Socio-demographic characteristics of Parents in Parental Opinion and NSPC surveys</b> | <b>% All Interviewed Parental Opinion Sample</b> | <b>% All Interviewed NSPC Sample</b> |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>   |  |                                      |
| Male  | 44   | 44                                   |
| Female  | 56   | 56                                   |
|   |  |                                      |
| <b>Age</b>  |  |                                      |
| Under 25  | 5  | 4                                    |
| 25-35   | 26   | 27                                   |
| 36-45   | 44   | 45                                   |
| 46 or over  | 26   | 24                                   |
|   |  |                                      |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>  |  |                                      |
| White   | 86   | 83                                   |
| Non-white   | 14   | 17                                   |
|   |  |                                      |
| <b>Household Income</b>   |  |                                      |
| Under £10,000   | 10   | 11                                   |
| £10,000 to £24,999  | 15   | 19                                   |
| £25,000 to £44,999  | 23   | 26                                   |
| £45,000 or more   | 31   | 28                                   |
| Not known / given   | 21   | 16                                   |
|   |  |                                      |
| <b>Highest Qualification</b>  |  |                                      |
| Degree level or above   | 27   | 29                                   |
| A-level / Voc. level 3 or above   | 30   | 29                                   |
| Below A-level / Voc. level 3 or other unknown   | 28   | 29                                   |
| No qualifications   | 15   | 13                                   |

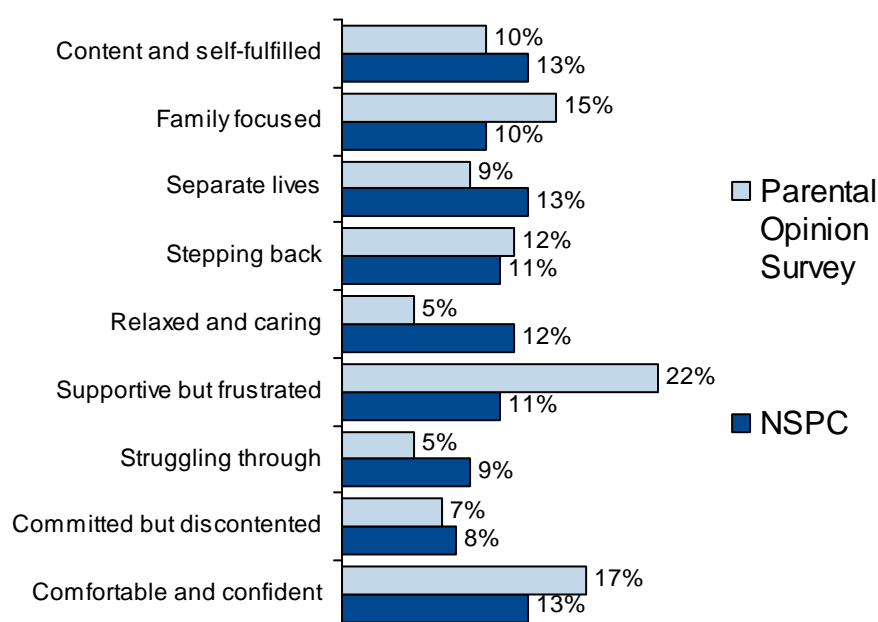
Table 2 shows that although there were sometimes differences in the demographic profile making up each segment (most notably gender) the general patterns remained consistent.

| Table 2. Demographic characteristics of Parental Segments | Comfortable and confident |    | Committed but discontented |    | Struggling through |    | Supportive but frustrated |    | Relaxed and caring |    | Stepping back |    | Separate lives |    | Family focused |    | Content and self-fulfilled |    |
|---|---------------------------|----|----------------------------|----|--------------------|----|---------------------------|----|--------------------|----|---------------|----|----------------|----|----------------|----|----------------------------|----|
| Below A-level / Voc. level 3                              | 24                        | 23 | 28                         | 36 | 36                 | 37 | 34                        | 27 | 30                 | 27 | 26            | 25 | 32             | 30 | 25             | 33 | 23                         | 26 |
| No qualifications   | 9                         | 10 | 26                         | 19 | 32                 | 21 | 15                        | 16 | 8                  | 10 | 12            | 18 | 18             | 12 | 18             | 21 | 7                          | 9  |
|   |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| <b>Gender</b>   |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| Male  | 49                        | 46 | 22                         | 46 | 50                 | 35 | 42                        | 42 | 35                 | 35 | 49            | 43 | 47             | 44 | 41             | 53 | 48                         | 42 |
| Female  | 51                        | 54 | 78                         | 54 | 50                 | 65 | 58                        | 58 | 65                 | 65 | 51            | 57 | 53             | 56 | 59             | 47 | 52                         | 58 |
|   |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| <b>Age</b>  |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| Under 25  | 7                         | 3  | 11                         | 10 | 7                  | 12 | 4                         | 6  | 8                  | 7  | 1             | 1  | -              | 1  | 7              | 6  | -                          | 1  |
| 25-35   | 34                        | 31 | 30                         | 27 | 33                 | 39 | 22                        | 28 | 40                 | 48 | 18            | 16 | 17             | 15 | 41             | 35 | 4                          | 6  |
| 36-45   | 44                        | 46 | 43                         | 45 | 47                 | 38 | 47                        | 43 | 43                 | 37 | 47            | 53 | 44             | 54 | 39             | 40 | 37                         | 48 |
| 46 or over  | 15                        | 19 | 17                         | 18 | 14                 | 10 | 27                        | 23 | 9                  | 9  | 34            | 29 | 39             | 30 | 13             | 19 | 59                         | 45 |
|   |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>  |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| White   | 86                        | 77 | 73                         | 77 | 79                 | 75 | 89                        | 85 | 91                 | 75 | 90            | 92 | 93             | 87 | 75             | 93 | 93                         | 62 |
| Non-white   | 14                        | 23 | 27                         | 23 | 21                 | 25 | 11                        | 15 | 8                  | 25 | 10            | 8  | 7              | 13 | 25             | 7  | 8                          | 38 |
|   |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| <b>Household Income</b>                                   |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| Under £10,000   | 6                         | 9  | 25                         | 21 | 21                 | 19 | 7                         | 14 | 10                 | 9  | 9             | 6  | 5              | 6  | 14             | 16 | 2                          | 5  |
| £10,000 to £24,999  | 12                        | 15 | 28                         | 24 | 14                 | 27 | 14                        | 21 | 19                 | 19 | 14            | 22 | 10             | 17 | 19             | 25 | 12                         | 11 |
| £25,000 to £44,999  | 25                        | 24 | 14                         | 25 | 25                 | 25 | 25                        | 25 | 23                 | 31 | 26            | 24 | 26             | 31 | 19             | 23 | 18                         | 26 |
| £45,000 or more   | 39                        | 38 | 14                         | 16 | 12                 | 13 | 32                        | 25 | 26                 | 27 | 34            | 34 | 40             | 30 | 26             | 19 | 40                         | 40 |
| Not known / given   | 18                        | 14 | 19                         | 13 | 27                 | 17 | 21                        | 15 | 22                 | 14 | 17            | 14 | 20             | 15 | 22             | 17 | 27                         | 19 |
|   |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| <b>Highest Qualification</b>                              |                           |    |                            |    |                    |    |                           |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |                |    |                            |    |
| Degree level or above                                     | 36                        | 41 | 16                         | 15 | 12                 | 17 | 21                        | 27 | 32                 | 30 | 36            | 35 | 22             | 29 | 25             | 21 | 37                         | 32 |
| A-level / Voc. level 3 or above                           | 32                        | 26 | 31                         | 29 | 21                 | 25 | 30                        | 30 | 30                 | 33 | 27            | 31 | 29             | 29 | 33             | 25 | 34                         | 33 |

**Key** - PO = Parental Opinion Survey    NSPC = National Survey of Parents and Children

The chart below shows how the parents were allocated into the segments for both the Parental Opinion Survey and NSPC.

**Chart 1 - Comparison of segments in Parental Opinion Survey vs NSPC Segmentation**



As highlighted above, the proportion of respondents allocated into each segment is not the same for both surveys. Nevertheless, it is still within reasonable bounds of similarity.

Recreating segments never produces an exact replication from one survey to the next. The parental segments that were created were based predominantly on attitudes of parents, rather than demographic details of parents. Unlike demographics, attitudes could not be controlled for in the sampling and weighting processes. Even though demographic characteristics might influence attitudes, these are still unlikely to stay the same for separate surveys (even though the sampling approach was the same) and moderate shifts in the proportion of interviewed parents appearing in each segment would be anticipated.

On a positive note, the attitudes of respondents within each segment are consistent between the NSPC and the Parental Opinion Survey.

## **The recreation of the Segmentation of Parents and Carers on the Parental Opinion Survey - A Technical Description**

The original segments were created for the National Survey of Parents and Carers (NSPC) using factors which represented a number of dimensions. These factors were then used to form the 9 segments, by separating people into groups that are similar within themselves, but different to each other.

The factors are based on the following dimensions (themes):

- Enjoyment of parenting
- Focus on family over money
- Satisfaction with environment
- Extent that identity is dependent on child
- Desirability of stay at home parenting
- Importance of education
- Involvement in education
- Age of Child

Each factor is a composite variable that represents a concept that cannot necessarily be measured directly. For example, 'enjoyment of parenting' is composed from a combination of the statements;

- As a parent I find it difficult to cope
- I find being a parent frustrating
- In general I feel very positive about myself

These factors were then used to form the segments, using k-means cluster method, which separates respondents into groups that are different to each other, but where respondent are similar within each group.

For more details on the creation of the segments, please see:

**<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/general/DCSF-RR059-TR.pdf>**

A large number of variables are used to form the segments, and recreating them using all the original variables is not practical in terms of the questionnaire length and content which would be needed in subsequent surveys.

The original segments were analysed to determine which questions were best at predicting the allocation of respondents to the correct segment. From these a number of formulae were derived from the original NSPC survey which allocate respondents based on their answers to seventeen questions.

The formulae that were derived allocate cases with a 76% allocation rate overall using the seventeen questions. The 17 questions were;

Q4  
Q6  
Age of children in household - Q7  
Q30 - Iteration 1 and 2  
Q31 - Iterations 1, 2 and 7  
Q32 - Iteration 1 and 2  
Q33 - Iteration 1, 2 and 3  
Q34  
Q35  
Q74 - Iteration 2

Some segments are better allocated than others and the table below shows the percentage of cases from the NSPC survey correctly allocated to their segment using the formulae. Even though there are variations for the different segments, the allocation rate is strong.

**Percentage of cases correctly allocated to the original segments, based on data from NSPC**

| Original Segment                | % of cases correctly allocated to segment using derived formulae |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1.00 Comfortable and confident  | 75.2%  |
| 2.00 Committed but discontented | 87.0%  |
| 3.00 Struggling through         | 77.9%  |
| 4.00 Supportive but frustrated  | 73.0%  |
| 5.00 Relaxed and caring         | 66.8%  |
| 6.00 Stepping back              | 72.6%  |
| 7.00 Separate lives             | 76.8%  |
| 8.00 Family focused             | 75.6%  |
| 9.00 Content and self-fulfilled | 75.5%  |
| Total                           | 76.0%  |

The seventeen questions were included in the Parental Opinion Survey, and the formulae were then applied in order to allocate respondents to a segment.

The distribution of the weighted and unweighted profiles of the respondents are shown below.

|                                | PP Counts<br>(weighted / unweighted) |     | PP proportions<br>(weighted / unweighted)<br>(%) |      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|--|------|
| A1. Comfortable and Confident  | 399                                  | 386 | 16.7   | 16.2 |
| A2. Committed but disconnected | 166                                  | 259 | 7.0  | 10.9 |
| A3. Struggling through         | 117                                  | 139 | 4.9  | 5.8  |
| A4. Supportive but frustrated  | 515                                  | 493 | 21.6   | 20.7 |
| A5. Relaxed and caring         | 126                                  | 124 | 5.3  | 5.2  |
| A6. Stepping back              | 274                                  | 248 | 11.5   | 10.4 |
| A7. Separate lives             | 211                                  | 187 | 8.9  | 7.8  |
| A8. Family focused             | 348                                  | 371 | 14.6   | 15.6 |
| A9. Content and self fulfilled | 227                                  | 177 | 9.5  | 7.4  |
| Total                          | 2384                                 |     | 100%   |      |

## Appendix G - Segmentation Key Findings and Pen Portraits

| Dimension  | The Segments               | %  |
|--|----------------------------|----|
| <b>Confident caring for child</b>                          | Comfortable and confident  | 98 |
|  | Committed but discontented | 89 |
|  | Struggling through         | 83 |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 92 |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 99 |
|  | Stepping back              | 93 |
|  | Separate lives             | 94 |
|  | Family focused             | 93 |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 97 |
| <b>High overall confidence (confidence index)</b>          | Comfortable and confident  | 34 |
|  | Committed but discontented | 21 |
|  | Struggling through         | 11 |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 17 |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 22 |
|  | Stepping back              | 8  |
|  | Separate lives             | 9  |
|  | Family focused             | 37 |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 3  |
| <b>Self rating as parent (Not very good / has trouble)</b> | Comfortable and confident  | 2  |
|  | Committed but discontented | 10 |
|  | Struggling through         | 15 |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 2  |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 2  |
|  | Stepping back              | 5  |
|  | Separate lives             | 6  |
|  | Family focused             | 1  |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | *  |
| <b>High frequency arguing with child</b>                   | Comfortable and confident  | 37 |
|  | Committed but discontented | 37 |
|  | Struggling through         | 52 |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 42 |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 40 |
|  | Stepping back              | 43 |
|  | Separate lives             | 40 |
|  | Family focused             | 21 |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 20 |

|   |                            |    |
|---|----------------------------|----|
| <b>Struggle to control child behaviour</b>                            | Comfortable and confident  | 10 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 23 |
|   | Struggling through         | 21 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 15 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 8  |
|   | Stepping back              | 21 |
|   | Separate lives             | 17 |
|   | Family focused             | 8  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 6  |
| <b>Frequent tension with partner (as a result of child behaviour)</b> | Comfortable and confident  | 3  |
|   | Committed but discontented | 9  |
|   | Struggling through         | 14 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 7  |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 12 |
|   | Stepping back              | 12 |
|   | Separate lives             | 9  |
|   | Family focused             | 4  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 5  |
| <b>Find parenting rewarding most of the time</b>                      | Comfortable and confident  | 93 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 76 |
|   | Struggling through         | 74 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 83 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 91 |
|   | Stepping back              | 69 |
|   | Separate lives             | 75 |
|   | Family focused             | 91 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 92 |
| <b>Find parenting frustrating most of the time</b>                    | Comfortable and confident  | 1  |
|   | Committed but discontented | 19 |
|   | Struggling through         | 18 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 21 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | *  |
|   | Stepping back              | 11 |
|   | Separate lives             | 15 |
|   | Family focused             | *  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 1  |

| Dimension   | The Segments               | %  |
|---|----------------------------|----|
| <b>Not happy with the amount of time spend with child</b>               | Comfortable and confident  | 42 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 36 |
|   | Struggling through         | 41 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 35 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 33 |
|   | Stepping back              | 47 |
|   | Separate lives             | 39 |
|   | Family focused             | 30 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 28 |
| <b>Feel involved in child's progress through school</b>                 | Comfortable and confident  | 98 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 94 |
|   | Struggling through         | 66 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 95 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 97 |
|   | Stepping back              | 59 |
|   | Separate lives             | 71 |
|   | Family focused             | 99 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 93 |
| <b>Would like to be more involved in child's school life</b>            | Comfortable and confident  | 29 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 43 |
|   | Struggling through         | 46 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 31 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 28 |
|   | Stepping back              | 40 |
|   | Separate lives             | 28 |
|   | Family focused             | 32 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 16 |
| <b>Confident in ability to support child's learning and development</b> | Comfortable and confident  | 96 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 90 |
|   | Struggling through         | 76 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 93 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 96 |
|   | Stepping back              | 86 |
|   | Separate lives             | 84 |



|   |                            |    |
|---|----------------------------|----|
|   | Family focused             | 95 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 91 |
| <b>Know a lot about how can help child's education</b>                    | Comfortable and confident  | 85 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 72 |
|   | Struggling through         | 53 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 80 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 80 |
|   | Stepping back              | 65 |
|   | Separate lives             | 71 |
|   | Family focused             | 82 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 77 |
| <b>Never feel confident helping child with homework</b>                   | Comfortable and confident  | 1  |
|   | Committed but discontented | 13 |
|   | Struggling through         | 19 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 9  |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 1  |
|   | Stepping back              | 12 |
|   | Separate lives             | 10 |
|   | Family focused             | 6  |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 9  |
| <b>Would like to be more involved in child's learning and development</b> | Comfortable and confident  | 54 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 67 |
|   | Struggling through         | 65 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 56 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 45 |
|   | Stepping back              | 56 |
|   | Separate lives             | 40 |
|   | Family focused             | 60 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 37 |

| Dimension   | The Segments               | %  |
|---|----------------------------|----|
| <b>Service user</b>   | Comfortable and confident  | 76 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 72 |
|   | Struggling through         | 66 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 66 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 71 |
|   | Stepping back              | 70 |
|   | Separate lives             | 58 |
|   | Family focused             | 68 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 58 |
| <b>Talks to other parents / carers about parenting issues</b>         | Comfortable and confident  | 80 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 69 |
|   | Struggling through         | 60 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 69 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 75 |
|   | Stepping back              | 71 |
|   | Separate lives             | 67 |
|   | Family focused             | 77 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 64 |
| <b>Talks to other family members about parenting issues</b>           | Comfortable and confident  | 81 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 79 |
|   | Struggling through         | 65 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 77 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 84 |
|   | Stepping back              | 81 |
|   | Separate lives             | 70 |
|   | Family focused             | 83 |
|   | Content and self fulfilled | 79 |
| <b>How received information, advice or support - written material</b> | Comfortable and confident  | 61 |
|   | Committed but discontented | 62 |
|   | Struggling through         | 51 |
|   | Supportive but frustrated  | 57 |
|   | Relaxed and caring         | 61 |
|   | Stepping back              | 63 |

|  |                            |              |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>- face-to-face contact</b>                            | Separate lives             | 66           |
|  | Family focused             | 62           |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 63           |
|  |                            |              |
|  |                            |              |
|  | Comfortable and confident  | 62           |
|  | Committed but discontented | 58           |
|  | Struggling through         | 55           |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 56           |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 61           |
|  | Stepping back              | 49           |
|  | Separate lives             | 50           |
|  | Family focused             | 61           |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 44           |
|  |                            |              |
|  |                            |              |
| <b>- web / internet / e-mail</b>                         | Comfortable and confident  | 31           |
|  | Committed but discontented | 14           |
|  | Struggling through         | 29           |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 23           |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 28           |
|  | Stepping back              | 30           |
|  | Separate lives             | 28           |
|  | Family focused             | 27           |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 34           |
|  |                            |              |
|  |                            |              |
| <b>- telephone helpline</b>                              | Comfortable and confident  | 20           |
|  | Committed but discontented | 18           |
|  | Struggling through         | 24           |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 22           |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 15           |
|  | Stepping back              | 20           |
|  | Separate lives             | 12           |
|  | Family focused             | 11           |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 25           |
| <b>Likely to attend a group specifically for fathers</b> | Comfortable and confident  | 26           |
|  | Committed but discontented | 54 (base=37) |
|  | Struggling through         | 29           |

|  |                            |    |
|--|----------------------------|----|
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 27 |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 18 |
|  | Stepping back              | 21 |
|  | Separate lives             | 9  |
|  | Family focused             | 41 |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 13 |
| <b>Confident would know where to go for information / advice</b>                 | Comfortable and confident  | 87 |
|  | Committed but discontented | 69 |
|  | Struggling through         | 62 |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 75 |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 81 |
|  | Stepping back              | 73 |
|  | Separate lives             | 77 |
|  | Family focused             | 81 |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 78 |
| <b>When last had contact with child's educational setting -within last month</b> | Comfortable and confident  | 76 |
|  | Committed but discontented | 75 |
|  | Struggling through         | 56 |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 72 |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 80 |
|  | Stepping back              | 60 |
|  | Separate lives             | 71 |
|  | Family focused             | 78 |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 64 |
| <b>- within last week</b>  | Comfortable and confident  | 40 |
|  | Committed but discontented | 41 |
|  | Struggling through         | 35 |
|  | Supportive but frustrated  | 38 |
|  | Relaxed and caring         | 53 |
|  | Stepping back              | 33 |
|  | Separate lives             | 39 |
|  | Family focused             | 52 |
|  | Content and self fulfilled | 24 |

## **PEN PORTRAITS**

### **Comfortable and confident**

- Likely to be confident caring for child and likely to appear in high confidence group (Confidence Index)
- Least likely segment to experience frequent tension with their partner as a result of their children's behaviour
- Most likely to find parenting rewarding most of the time
- Likely to say they are not happy with the amount of time they spend with their child(ren)
- Likely to feel involved in their child's progress through school and know a lot about how they can help with their child's education and feel confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development
- Most likely to be a user of parental information, advice and guidance services and to receive this through face to face contact or through web / internet / email
- Most likely to feel confident that they would know where to go for parental information / advice
- Most likely to talk to other parents about parenting issues

### **Committed but discontented**

- Less likely to feel confident caring for their child
- Likely to rate themselves as not very good as a parent / has trouble
- Most likely to struggle to control their child's behaviour and find parenting frustrating most of the time
- Likely to say they never feel confident helping their child with homework and most likely to say they want to be more involved in their child's school life and learning and development
- Likely to be a service user and to receive this information, advice and guidance through written material or face to face contact. However, less likely to say they feel confident they would know where to go for information / advice

### **Struggling through**

- Least likely to feel confident caring for their child
- Most likely to rate themselves as not very good at parenting or have trouble
- Most likely to have high frequency of arguing with their child, struggle to control their child's behaviour and experience frequent tension with their partner as a result of their child's behaviour
- Likely to find parenting frustrating
- Likely to say they are not happy with the amount of time they spend with their child
- Least likely to feel involved in their child's progress through school and likely to want to be more involved in their child's school life and learning and development. Also, least likely to feel confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development and unlikely to say they know a lot about how they can help with their child's education
- Least likely say they never feel confident helping their child with their homework
- Less likely to be a service user. Service users in this segment are most likely to receive information, advice or support through written material
- Least likely to feel confident they would know where to go for information / advice
- Least likely to talk to parents/carers and family members about parenting issues
- Less likely to have had contact with child's education setting in last week or the last month

### **Supportive but frustrated**

- Most likely to find parenting frustrating most of the time
- Likely to say they feel confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development and to know a lot about how they can help with their child's education
- Less likely to be a service user
- Likely to receive information, advice or support through telephone helpline

### **Relaxed and caring**

- Most likely say they feel confident when caring for their child
- Likely to appear in high confidence group (Confidence Index)
- Unlikely to say they struggle to control their child's behaviour, although likely to say they experience frequent tension with their partner as a result of their child's behaviour
- Least likely to say they find parenting frustrating most of the time
- Likely to say they feel involved in their child's progress through school and confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development
- Likely to be a service user and to receive information, advice and support through face to face contact
- Likely to talk to other parents and family members about parenting issues
- Likely to feel confident that they would know where to go for information and advice
- Most likely to have had contact with child's education setting in last month AND last week

### **Stepping back**

- Unlikely to be in high confidence group (Confidence Index)
- Likely to have a high frequency of arguing with child. Also, struggle to control child's behaviour and experience frequent tension with their partner as a result of child's behaviour
- Least likely to find parenting rewarding
- Most likely to say they are not happy with the amount of time spent with child
- Unlikely to feel involved in child's progress through school or know a lot about how they can help with child's education
- Likely to receive parental information, advice or support through written material
- Unlikely to have had contact with child's educational setting in last week/month

### **Separate lives**

- Unlikely to be in high confidence group (Confidence Index)
- Unlikely to rate themselves as not very good at parenting / have trouble
- Likely to struggle to control child's behaviour and experience frequent tension with partner as a result of child's behaviour
- Likely to feel involved in child's progress through school but unlikely to feel confident in ability to support child's learning and development
- Most likely to receive information, advice or support through written material

### **Family focused**

- Most likely to be in high confidence group (Confidence Index)
- Unlikely to have a high frequency of arguing with child or struggle to control child's behaviour
- Likely to find parenting rewarding most of the time and least likely to find parenting frustrating
- Least likely to say they are not happy with the amount of time spent with child
- Likely to feel involved in child's progress through school and confident in their ability to support child's learning and development and know a lot about how they can help with child's education
- Likely to talk to other parents and family members about parenting issues
- Likely to receive information, advice and guidance through face to face contact
- Likely to feel confident they would know where to go for information/advice
- Likely to have had contact with child's education setting in last week / month



### **Content and self fulfilled**

- Least likely to be in high confidence group (Confidence Index) and to rate themselves as not very good at parenting / has trouble
- Unlikely to have high frequency of arguing with child or to struggle to control child's behaviour
- Likely to find parenting rewarding most of the time
- Least likely to want to be more involved in child's school life or child's learning and development
- Least likely to be a service user and unlikely to talk to other parents about parenting issues
- Most likely to receive information, advice or support through web/ email and telephone helplines
- Less likely to have had contact with child's education setting in last week / last month

## Appendix H - Parental Frustration - Regression Analysis

Parental frustration is an area explored in section 1.4 of the report. Further analysis was conducted in order to look deeper into levels of frustration and to unpack the key drivers of increased frustration levels. A summary of this work is provided in section 1.4 and further details are provided below.

A logistic regression was conducted to control for a number of factors when looking at levels of frustration among respondents. Variables were tested in three blocks to assess the impact of different factors.

Firstly, the following attributes were controlled for:

- number of resident children;
- age of respondent;
- gender of respondent; and
- age of the reference child.

The number of children resident in the household is the most likely factor to be associated with whether or not the respondent is frustrated 'most or some of the time'. Parents with two children are 40 per cent more likely than those with one child to say they are frustrated 'most or some of the time', whilst those with three children are 85 per cent more likely to say this.

Education background was also a key driver. Respondents with a degree level or above are 29 per cent less likely to be frustrated than those with level two qualifications.

The analysis also controlled for the relationship between working status and marital status. Compared with couples who are both in work, couples where one or neither parent works are 37 per cent less likely to be frustrated. However, compared to couples both in work, lone parents (regardless of working status) are not significantly more or less likely to be frustrated.

One possible reason for the above is the lack of time that working couples perceive they have. This is borne out by the findings from the PICE research, which show that lack of time is the key barrier to greater involvement for parents. Issues around work-life balance may therefore contribute to increased frustration levels. It also supports findings from the NSPC, which show that parents who claim to spend 'nowhere near enough' time with their child were more likely to cite feelings of frustration. Further regression modelling (see below) also shows that 'time' is indeed a significant factor.

The gender of the respondent and the age of the reference child are not significant factors in whether or not the parent is frustrated 'most or some of the time'.

Once controlling for all of the attributes mentioned above, other variables that were found to be significant when tested in the regression model include:

- Satisfaction with 'me time'
- Satisfaction with time able to spend with partner

- Satisfaction with amount of time spend with child
- Struggle to control child's behaviour
- Confidence Index<sup>24</sup>

Lack of time was a key driver of frustration. The survey identified a number of areas in which this lack of time is evident.

- Parents who said they were dissatisfied with the amount of 'me time' they get are 72 per cent more likely to be frustrated than those who are satisfied;
- Parents who are dissatisfied with the time spent with their partner are 52 per cent more likely to be frustrated than those who are satisfied with the amount of time they spend with their partner; and
- Parents who say they spend nowhere near enough time with their child are 65 per cent more likely to be frustrated than those who said they spent the right amount of time.

Behaviour management also had a significant impact on frustration. Parents who struggle to control their child's behaviour are over three times more likely to be frustrated 'most or some of the time' compared with those who disagree that they face a struggle.

Finally, parental confidence is an important factor. Parents in the middle and lowest confidence groupings (of the confidence index) are more likely to be frustrated than those in the top confidence band.

In summary, there are a number of important factors that affect parental frustration. Frustration is driven by *demographic* and *attitudinal* factors. Key demographic factors include:

- Increased number of children;
- Lower education background; and
- Working status (two full-time working parents).

Attitudinal factors which have the largest impact include:

- Perceived lack of time;
- Perceived behaviour issues; and
- Lack of parental confidence.

While the above analysis shows that the demographic and attitudinal factors are significant drivers of frustration in their own right, some of the above are also linked. More specifically, parents with lower attainment levels have lower confidence whilst working parents are more likely to be dissatisfied with the amount of time that they have to spend with their children.

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<sup>24</sup> See further discussion of the creation of the Confidence Index in Section 1.11

There are a number of policy challenges associated with engaging 'frustrated' parents further. These parents may need more support and encouragement as well as work to build their parental self-esteem and confidence. There are possible opportunities for schools to reach out to these parents, although they may require help identifying and supporting them. Additional support might be needed in behaviour management strategies. The key barriers that schools and support services might face in engaging this group are likely to centre on time constraints, a particular issue amongst working parents.

## Appendix I - Creating a Confidence Index

The following procedure was followed when creating the Confidence Index;

1. An initial set of variables was selected which were potentially associated with parental confidence (based on Researcher knowledge);

Q30 - Iterations 1 and 2.

Q31 - Iterations 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 9.

Q32 - Iterations 1 and 2.

Q33 - Iterations 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Q34

Q35

Q37

Q38

Q39

Q40

Q42 - Iterations, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 .

Q45 - Iterations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Q46

Q47 Q48 Q49

Q63

Q64

Q66

Q67 - Iterations 1, 2 and 3.

Q74 - Iterations 1 and 2.

Q75

Q76

Q79 - Iterations 1, 2 and 3.

Q81 - Iterations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Q82 - Iterations 1, 2 and 3.

2. The above variables were recoded to ensure that all respondents had a response:
  - Missing values were either assigned randomly according to distribution of responses or a simple mean substitution was carried out.
  - This recoding was done so that response scales ran from lowest to highest, less frequent to more frequent etc
3. The correlation of the initial set of variables was calculated against 5 questions in the Parental Opinion Survey questionnaire which asked about confidence directly. All but two of these questions had a correlation of  $\pm 0.05$ , which is the rough cut-off point for statistical significance. The 5 'direct confidence' questions were:

Q44

Q45

Q63

Q75

Q79

4. The data file of respondents was then split into two halves after sorting by sex and age with a systematic one in two selection and a factor analysis was then attempted on the analysis sample.<sup>1</sup>
5. Fifteen factors were then extracted which seemed relevant after conducting the factor analysis. The process of extracting factors from a factor analysis is a combination of using both theoretical and statistical criteria. The key question is deciding how many factors to extract while also interpreting the meaning of each factor to ensure that they have a strong conceptual foundation. Fifteen factors were extracted which were judged to provide the best factor structure to represent the data. The percentage of variance explained was one of the statistical criteria used to decide on the number of factors to extract. The purpose is to ensure practical significance of the factors by ensuring that they explain at least a specified amount of variance. A solution which explained 52% of the variance was deemed satisfactory.
6. The same factor analysis was then applied to the Holdout sample. This was done through forcing the SPSS data file to extract 15 factors to see whether the same factors would emerge (52% variance explained).
7. Thirteen factors in the Holdout sample appeared to match with the Analysis sample and these thirteen factors were then chosen to make up the confidence index. What is meant by this is that when the factor analysis was run on the Holdout sample, 13 factors appeared to have the same interpretation in both sets of solutions i.e. similar factor loadings<sup>2</sup> for both the Analysis and Holdout samples. Thus, as they were found in two separate samples they were judged to be robust representations of the data.
8. A representative variable was then chosen from each of the 13 factors. The objective here was to identify appropriate variables that could be used in a confidence index. The simplest way of doing this was to select the variable with the highest loading on each chosen factor to act as a surrogate variable that was representative of that factor.

The 13 selected representative variables were;

- Q42 Iteration 4
- Q79 Iteration 2
- Q76
- Q47 Selected response 1 (Information or advice on pregnancy, maternity or babies)
- Q49 Selected response 2 (Information or advice on teenagers)
- Q33 Iteration 1
- Q45 Iteration 5
- Q39
- Q45 Iteration 6
- Q37
- Q81 Iteration 2
- Q81 Iteration 5.
- Q64

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<sup>1</sup> One of the ways of validating a factor analysis is to divide the sample into two sub-samples. One is used for creating the factors and the other is used for validation purposes. The sub-samples are known as the Analysis sample and Holdout sample respectively. Each sub-sample needs to be of adequate size to support conclusions from the results and in this case, the sample size was sufficient to warrant dividing the original sample.

<sup>2</sup> Factor loadings are the correlation between the original variables and the factors.

9. Missing values for each selected representative variable were dealt with by mean substitution. For each of the 13 representative variables, the response scales were recoded into numeric scales, with higher numbers indicating greater confidence. However, some respondents had not answered those questions with a valid response (for example, their response had been “Don’t know”). These were therefore missing values and could not be coded into the numeric scale ordinarily. In order to create the index, each respondent needed to have a valid score for each of the 13 representative variables. One of the most widely used methods of remedying missing values is to use mean substitution. Mean substitution replaces the missing values for a variable with the mean value of that variable calculated from all valid responses. Thus all respondents ended up with complete information.
10. Response scales were then reversed for all but two of the representative variables so that higher codes would indicate greater confidence
11. The Confidence index was then created by getting a summed score of the standardised variable score multiplied by its original factor eigenvalue<sup>3</sup> (this is the average from the Analysis sample and Holdout sample factor analysis). A higher score indicated higher confidence. The lowest possible score that could be achieved in theory was 18 and the highest was 98. In practice, 35 was the lowest achieved score and 94 the highest for this year of the survey. The mean average score achieved was 69.<sup>4</sup>
12. Three banded variables were then created at percentile cut-offs: (25:50:25), (20:60:20) and (10:80:10).
13. Respondents were then allocated into one of the following groups based on their ‘score’:
  - Low confidence. The score range for parents in this group was between 35 and 61.
  - Medium confidence. The score range for parents in this group was between 62 and 76.
  - High confidence. The score range for parents in this group was between 77 and 94.
14. These groupings were constructed to ensure there were adequate numbers in each group for in-depth sub-group analysis, whilst also making sure that the overriding majority of parents appeared in the Medium confidence group. In total, 20 per cent of parents were allocated to the low confidence group, 60 per cent to the medium confidence group and 20 per cent to the high confidence group. This split was not created based on any pre-existing concepts and it should not be assumed that 20 per cent of all parents are low in confidence or that 20 per cent of all parents are high in confidence.

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<sup>3</sup> Eigenvalues are the variances of the factors.

<sup>4</sup> For future waves any movement of the average score by around +/- 1 in either direction may mean a statistically significant (at the 95 per cent confidence level) shift in parental confidence.

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